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Full Name of Author — Nom complet de l'auteur

Miriam Anne Christene Carson

Date of Birth — Date de naissance August 18, 1948	Country of Birth — Lieu de naissance Canada

Permanent Address — Résidence fixe

Apt. 7
10654 - 83 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T6E 2E2

Title of Thesis — Titre de la thèse

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GRADE 1 CHILDREN'S CONCEPT OF READING STRATEGIES AND HOW IT IS SHAPED BY CLASSROOM FACTORS

by

© MIRIAM ANNE CHRISTENE CARSON

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND
RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled Grade 1 Children's Concept of Reading Strategies and How it is Shaped by Classroom Factors submitted by Miriam Anne Carson in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

David Dillon

Supervisor

Dennis Kealy

James B. Parsons

Date August 31, 1979

ABSTRACT

This study examined Grade 1 children's concept of reading strategies and how it is shaped by classroom factors. The sample, chosen by teacher judgment, consisted of six low achievers in reading and six high achievers in reading from one classroom in an Alberta school board. The researcher spent two weeks observing classroom reading situations and taking detailed notes about the activities. During this time, each child selected for the study was privately interviewed. The interview consisted of an oral reading session using the Standard Reading Inventory to establish the child's instructional reading level and to provide oral reading miscues at instructional level. This was followed by administering the Children's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire to discover what the child verbalized about reading strategies. At the end of the study a similar questionnaire was administered to the teacher (the Teacher's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire) in order to find out what she would verbalize about reading strategies.

Verbalized concepts of reading strategies were compared with the actual strategies employed. Finally, an examination of the anecdotal notes on classroom reading instruction was made to see what patterns were present.

In the low and high achievers' verbalizations about reading strategies, two characteristics were noted: confusion about strategies for effective reading, and the limited nature of these strategies. Although some responses reflected a definite difference between the two groups, the conflicting responses exhibited by individuals were more pronounced.

The pattern exhibited by both low and high achievers' actual reading strategies was surprisingly similar. Both groups relied heavily upon graphic similarity as their main cue. The one main difference between the two groups was that the high achievers were slightly more successful in integrating other strategies than the low achievers. This led to the high achievers using context (semantic acceptability) and self-correction more.

After examining the interrelated classroom factors, five sources of the children's confusion about reading strategies were apparent. These sources were the teacher's own confusion about reading strategies, the limited purpose established for reading, the lack of integration of content, the absence of a consistent criterion of good reading and problems in the implementation of the reading series.

The findings of this study have implications both for the training of teachers and the classroom instruction of early readers.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM

In today's society it is essential for children to learn to read. Concern about developing this ability has led to a number of recent investigations into reading acquisition in which the emphasis has been on understanding and describing the process by which reading is learned and refined. This process has been approached via linguistics and cognitive psychology and has produced unparalleled speculation. As well, many models and theories have evolved. One well-founded model of reading was presented by Goodman (1970). Of his model he said, "its fault lie, not in its complexity, but in the fact that it is not yet complex enough to fully account for the complex phenomena in the actual behavior of readers" (p. 271). Ruddell (1970) believes that more information is necessary before assumptions about the reading process can be made for "until such information is available, our theoretical formulations of the reading process will remain extremely weak. It is obvious we have far to go" (p. 16). Similarly, Venezky and Calfee (1970) remark on the scarcity of data for formulating models.

So, in reality, our present theories and models are constructed primarily through inference (Robinson, 1970).

Extensive in-depth research needs to be done before the reading process will be well understood. Such an understanding of the process is a prerequisite for knowing the basic skills and abilities that are necessary for beginning readers, whether or not this should involve a particular sequence or hierarchy for learning to be maximized, and what type of environment, including the teacher's role, is most beneficial.

Purpose

The purpose of the present study was to provide more information on the process of reading acquisition by examining children's concepts of reading strategies. Previous studies have investigated the strategies of beginning readers (Biemiller, 1970; Carlson, 1975; Clay, 1968; Flemming, 1974; Y. Goodman, 1967; McKinnon, 1959; Weber, 1970), and the difference in children's concept of reading (Clay, 1972; Denny & Weintraub, 1965; Downing, 1970; Johns, 1972; McConkie & Nixon, 1959; Reid, 1966). Yet, no study has considered children's concept of reading from the viewpoint that an integral part of this concept is the strategies which children believe they should use to read well. An analogy will help to clarify this perspective.

If one were to analyze a person's concept of tennis, one would begin by asking, "What is tennis?" To this one would receive a description or definition, that it is a sport played with a racket and ball on a court divided in half by a net. One might discover that the purpose of the sport is to hit the ball across the net more consistently than your opponent. This will involve the rules about specific lines on the court, the meaning of sets and matches, how to serve the ball, and how to score points. Finally the person would expand upon the technique or strategies he employs in order to play most effectively. He might explain how best to hit the forehand by describing the proper backswing, approach, hit, and follow-through. He might follow general strategies such as moving his opponent from one side of the court to another during a rally and varying the speed of his returns. Characterizing tennis in this manner is to (1) give a general description, (2) explain the purpose, (3) give an account of the rules and (4) explain how to use them most efficiently.

In the same manner, one's concept of chess would be expressed through a statement of description, purpose, rules, and strategies. Chess could be described as a game for two people played on a board with 64 squares of alternate colours with each player having 16 pieces. The purpose of the game being to capture the other person's chessmen by following rules of the game such as setting out the pieces along two horizontal rows, alternating turns, and using each chessman to move and capture in its own way. The effectiveness of one's play could be enhanced through the utilization of certain techniques such as attacking a piece that is already occupied with an essential defense task, 'Bishop forks' where a Bishop simultaneously attacks two other pieces, or 'pinning' which involves attacking a piece which cannot move because an even more valuable piece is behind it in the line of attack.

Reading, too, is a rule governed activity which can be described and has a purpose. Reading could be described as an activity involving the interpretation of a series of coded symbols. The purpose of reading could be for learning or for enjoyment. Rules for the activity would involve starting to read at the top of the page, reading from left to right, and utilizing the rules of the system of print. Strategies for reading would include things such as using picture clues, employing sound-symbol association to figure out unknown words, and predicting a response from context. Thus, one's understanding of what reading is, is an account of description, purpose, rules, and strategies (see Table 1).

Several studies have examined either the description, purpose, rules, or strategies of reading. Yet no study has provided in-depth information about how classroom environment shapes children's concept of reading strategies. However, this is central to participation for one cannot be said to have a complete concept for what one does not know how to do.

This study sought to investigate not only the

Table 1

The Concept of an Activity

Activity	Description	Purpose	Rules	Strategies
Tennis	a sport played with with a racket and ball on a court divided in half by a net	to hit the ball across the net more consistently than your opponent	1. lines on the court 2. sets and matches 3. how to score points	1. how best to hit the forehand stroke 2. moving opponent from one side of the court to another 3. varying the speed of returns
Chess	a game for two people played on a board with 64 squares of alternate colours with each player having 16 pieces	to capture the other player's chessmen	1. setting out the pieces in two horizontal rows 2. alternating turns 3. each chessman moving and capturing in its own way	1. attacking a piece that is already occupied with an essential defense task 2. Bishop forks where a Bishop simultaneously attacks two other pieces 3. 'pinning'
Reading	an activity involving the interpretation of a series of coded symbols	to determine the meaning of the coded symbols	1. starting to read at the top of the page 2. reading from left to right 3. utilizing the rules of the system of print	1. using picture clues 2. employing sound-symbol association to figure out unknown words 3. predicting a response from context

children's concepts of what strategies they should use to read well, but also many of the various factors influencing the strategies children utilize when reading.

Definition of Terms

concept	- abstract impression formed by experiences.
strategy	- the actual procedure children use when reading. Operationally defined by verbalizations and actual behaviour.
low achieving readers	- six Grade 1 students who in the teacher's judgment are the poorest readers in the class.
high achieving readers	- six Grade 1 students who in the teacher's judgment are the best readers in the class.
instructional reading level	- the reading level at which students should be placed for reading instruction as measured by the Standard Reading Inventory.
miscue	- any divergence a reader makes from a written text while reading orally. It is assumed that all readers make miscues and what is important is not

the quantity (number) but the quality (type) of miscue because this implies the process the reader employs.

Research Questions

1. What do Grade 1 children verbalize about reading strategies?
2. What reading strategies do the children actually employ?
3. Is there any difference between the verbalized and actual reading strategies of low achieving and high achieving readers?
4. How do classroom factors shape these reading strategies?

Design of the Study

The investigation of Grade 1 children's concept of reading strategies and how it is shaped by classroom factors was carried out through a combined procedure of analyzing oral reading miscues, interviewing teachers and students, and observing reading instruction in the classroom. The data on children's actual reading strategies was acquired by having six high achieving readers and six low achieving readers read passages at their instructional level in private, tape-recorded sessions. Miscues were then analyzed and reading strategies inferred. Two questionnaires, one to assess children's verbalizations about reading strategies and the other to investigate the teacher's verbalizations of reading strategies, were constructed by the researcher. These were administered by interview. A pilot study had determined that Grade 1 children were able to understand the questions and respond with a variety of answers. As well, two weeks were spent observing the classroom reading instruction. Afterwards, all interview responses were tabulated and categorized. Then the verbalized concepts of reading strategies were compared with the actual strategies the children employed. Finally, an examination of the description of classroom reading instruction was made. From this description, emerging patterns were described.

Assumptions

Several assumptions underlaid this study. First, it was assumed that oral reading miscues imply reading strategies. Second, it was assumed that reference to an actual oral reading passage would facilitate the children's answering of interview questions. Third, it was assumed that the author was competent enough to interject probing when the children's responses required clarification. Finally, it was assumed that the author's background would enable classroom reading situations to be perceptively observed.

Limitations

1. The generalization of the results to the larger population are limited due to the small sample. However, the small sample enabled the researcher to

describe more completely the children's concept of reading strategies and how it is shaped by classroom factors which should lead to more questions for future research.

2. The short space of time for collecting data has limited the amount gathered and therefore, its degree of reliability.
3. The presence of the observer may have contributed to the loss of specific behaviours though the study was in its natural setting. However, the days the observer was present before any interviews were conducted should have helped to keep the behaviours as natural as possible.
4. Young children may not interpret the questions correctly. This limitation has been reduced by the pilot study and also their verbalized concepts of strategies have been compared with their actual performance so this problem should be minimal.

Significance

This study examined many of the factors influencing children's reading strategies. No study has yet provided in-depth answers about the strategies children use and how they are shaped by classroom factors. Therefore, the present study could contribute knowledge to increase our understanding of the nature of the beginning reader and the process of reading acquisition. The questionnaires devised for this study might be employed diagnostically by the teachers of beginning readers in addition to the analysis of oral reading miscues in order to discover the reading strategies the classroom environment and her teaching have created. Then a program dealing with weak or non-existent strategies could be planned.

Overview of the Thesis

Chapter 2 contains a review of the literature related to the purpose of the present study. Early studies examined general aspects of reading concept, whereas, recent investigations had a more specific focus so were classified according to the author's previously stated categories of reading concept (description, purpose, rules, and strategies).

Chapter 3 describes the research design employed in the study. The sample, pilot study, procedure, and data analysis are explained.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of actual classroom observations, interviews, and the analysis of the children's reading strategies.

Chapter 5 is a discussion and summary of the findings related to each research question. As well, recommendations for further research and implications for instruction are discussed. Auxilliary data is included in the appendices.

Chapter 2

A SURVEY OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

As description, purpose, and rules are an integral part of concept of reading as well as strategies are, a brief review of some of the literature on the former will develop background to help put the latter, the strategies of reading, in perspective. Also, many of the studies on description, purpose, and rules provide reasons for the procedure employed in the present study. Each study is placed in one of these categories according to its major emphasis. It bears noting that early studies examined very general aspects of reading concept while only recently have studies sought to investigate the child's concept of reading strategies.

Studies on the Description of Reading

Studies investigating children's expectations about learning to read (McConkie & Nixon, 1959; Stewart, 1966), and studies in which children were asked what reading is (Denny & Weintraub, 1965; Johns, 1972) found much variability in the children's responses. The researchers believed that children needed more help in developing their perceptions of the reading process. However, their conclusions are questionable because all the studies mentioned required the children just to answer questions. Firstly, the children might have had difficulty interpreting the researcher's questions. Secondly, the children might have understood the question but not have had the ability to verbalize what they knew. Thirdly, the children might have verbalized something they had been told and which they did not really believe. The present study intended to remedy these problems by providing a concrete reading situation to which the children could relate the questions which were later asked. As well, much clarification of responses was required and verbalizations were compared with actual behaviour.

Studies on the Purpose for Reading

Edwards (1961) and Muskopf (1962) both investigated children's purposes for reading through a Reading Concept Test which consisted of multiple choice and forced choice technique. These researchers found no significant correlation between purpose for reading and reading achievement and intelligence (Edwards, 1961) or reading achievement, intelligence, and method of instruction (Muskopf, 1962). Much valuable information may have been lost using the multiple-choice and more especially the forced choice technique. That is why the present study did not develop a classification system before the data was collected. Instead, the data was examined, patterns emerged, and in order not to lose important information, a broad descriptive method rather than a more limiting statistical method was selected for analyzing the data. In 1978, McLaughlin, who devised a Related Concepts of Reading Questionnaire, did find a significant correlation between purpose for reading and method employed. There is a discrepancy between the results of this study and that of Muskopf (1962) showing that more data is in fact needed before any solid conclusions can be reached. Also, the question of how certain methods produced different concepts of reading was not pursued and the present study has examined this aspect. Further, the teacher's own conceptual base was not investigated. This seems a grave oversight as recent research (Barr and Duffy, 1978) has indicated that the difference in instructional effectiveness is probably not the materials or methodology, but lies in the teacher's own belief system. By implication then, the teacher's belief system more than anything else is responsible for the formation of beginning readers' concepts of reading. The present study investigated the classroom teacher's conceptualizations of the reading process by means of actual observation, semi-structured interview (The Teacher's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire), and informal discussion.

Studies on the Rules of Reading

Reid (1966) and Downing (1970) examined children's perceptions of reading and writing through open-ended questions. Both researchers found that children had great difficulty understanding the abstract technical terms which adults constantly use. However, Downing (1970) discovered that concrete aids stimulated verbal responses of which the children were not capable when concrete objects were not present. The present study has included an actual reading situation at the beginning of each interview in order to make verbalizing easier. If a child had difficulty answering a question, an instance in the passage just read could be referred to by the interviewer and this seemed to greatly enhance the children's ability to respond.

A confirmation of the present study's reason for comparing the actual reading strategies of children to their verbalizations about reading strategies comes from Glass and Burton (1974) who showed that children frequently state the rules when asked yet fail to apply them. Thus, a mere test of knowledge or a questionnaire may not be very significant.

Studies on Reading Strategies

This section presents studies that have focussed on reading strategies and is most pertinent to the present investigation. The studies on reading strategies focus on four different areas: (1) the strategies of beginning readers, (2) the influence of instructional method upon reading strategies, (3) a comparison of the reading strategies of good and poor readers, and (4) beginning readers' verbalizations about reading strategies.

Strategies of Beginning Readers

The first notable study examining the reading strategies of beginning readers was of a very general nature. McKinnon (1959) examined anecdotal notes in first graders' reading profiles and reported firstly, that many errors were dependent not upon graphic form or shape of the words in the text as was popularly believed, but upon grammatical structure or how the word functioned syntactically in the sentence. Secondly, a second error made in a sentence was usually consistent with the previous sentence error suggesting to McKinnon that some readers were processing larger units than words. Since this early study, more systematic methods have been developed to investigate the beginning reader's use of the three cue systems: graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic.

Y. Goodman (1967) examined the oral reading behaviour of six beginning readers for nine sessions from January to November. Goodman recorded and analyzed the miscues and observed (1) all beginning readers make miscues, (2) the more miscues committed, the lower the percentage of corrections, (3) all cue systems (graphophonic, syntactic, semantic) were employed by all the beginning readers to differing degrees, (4) adequate comprehension was attained when miscues ranged from 5-14 per 100 words, (5) miscues were more frequently syntactically acceptable than semantically acceptable, and (6) syntactically acceptable miscues were more frequent at a sentence rather than phrase level.

In 1968, Clay followed the reading progress of 100 first grade children for one year during which time weekly records were kept. The results of a word identification task administered to all children at the end of the year were employed to divide the children into four groups: high, high-medium, low-medium, and low. It was noted that these groups exhibited different correctional behaviour while reading orally: the high group corrected one in three errors; the high-medium group corrected one in four errors; the low-medium group corrected one in eight errors while the low group corrected one in 20 errors. Clay concluded that the high group successfully related information from all three cue systems (graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic) and the high-medium group was able to correct many errors through integration. Although the medium-low group tried to integrate the information, their errors were so numerous that they could not do so, while the low group seemed to make little effort to relate cues at all.

Weber (1970) also conducted a study in which she analyzed the word recognition errors of first graders in order to determine the strategies employed. She concluded that beginning readers use (1) graphic information, (2) stem morphemes, (3) grammatical structure, and (4) meaning. Also noted was the fact that children drew a large number of their real word miscues from a list of words which they already knew from their reading series.

In 1975, Carlson too found that children employed all three cue systems in order to reconstruct meaning. The syntactic structure of passages was used most while the graphophonic and semantic cueing systems were employed to varying degrees. This result concurs with Clay's 1968 study where children who learned to read by a method stressing meaningful units tended to be guided by the syntactic framework of sentences.

Biemiller (1970) studied the shifts in error pattern of 42 first grade children in two classes over eight months of instruction. The method of instruction was a basal method and word identification strategies were inferred from miscues committed on contextual material. Three error patterns were identified and Biemiller suggested it was a developmental sequence.

1. Contextually-constrained errors - This involved substituting words that were grammatically and semantically acceptable. The children made minimum use of graphic information by using information learned aurally.
2. Non-response errors - Non-response errors increased while children made fewer contextually constrained errors but more graphically constrained ones.
3. Graphically and contextually-constrained errors - The children made fewer non-response errors and

both graphically and contextually constrained
errors increased.

Barr (1972) has suggested that these stages may be the result of basal reading instruction and not a developmental sequence to which all beginning readers are subject.

Fleming (1974) conducted a follow-up study to Biemiller's (1970) study to investigate whether first graders could be placed into hierarchical stages similar to Biemiller's. Results confirmed that the children could be placed into comparable stages; however Fleming identified five stages instead of three.

Influence of Instructional Method Upon Reading Strategies

In 1972, Barr analyzed the oral reading errors of 41 first grade children taught by two instructional methods, sight and phonic. The two groups were given instruction for 15 minutes on five or 10 words. Twenty-four hours later the children were asked to pronounce the words. When the word recognition errors of the phonic group were examined, their responses were found to include a high proportion of nonsense words or words that came from outside the sample of words that had been taught and non-response errors. So the phonic children were attempting to use strategies related to the method of instruction, the association of sound and symbols - when this strategy failed, they tended not to respond. In contrast, the majority of errors of the sight-word group came from similar words that had been taught at the same time. Apparently the sight-word group had no other strategies for analyzing words which they did not immediately recognize. Barr concluded that the method of instruction does influence the pattern of word recognition errors or different instruction produces different strategies. It seems that the conclusions of this study are somewhat limited due to the short period of time allowed for instruction and the fact that the results are attributed entirely to this 15 minutes of instruction and no other factors such as previous experience were considered. However, the present study has investigated the actual method of reading instruction employed in the classroom as one factor which could influence reading strategies.

In 1975, Barr reported the results of another investigation of the influence of instruction on reading strategies of first-grade children. Two groups of children were taught by the regular classroom teacher. One group was taught by a sight word method, the other by a phonic method. Barr tested the children twice (December and May) during the school year. The first test involved 29 isolated words while the second test consisted of 41 isolated words. When the word recognition errors were examined, the children were identified as using either a phonic or sight-word strategy. If one or more nonsense words and a limited number of responses drawn from the regular reading text were included in the child's errors, the child was identified as using a phonic strategy, whereas, if there were no nonsense words and if 75 percent of the responses were from the child's regular reading text, the child's errors inferred a sight-word strategy. Firstly, the strategies of most children in a sample of 32 were identified employing these criteria. Secondly, the strategies of the phonic group more frequently deviated from the method by which they were taught than the sight-word group during initial instruction. Still, employing words in isolation to measure reading strategies is questionable because more and sometimes different strategies are used when words are placed in context. That is why the present study employed only words in paragraph context to infer reading strategies.

DeLawter (1975) examined the relationship between beginning reading instruction and miscue patterns in 169 end-of-the-year second grade students who had either been taught by a phonic or sight-word method. Thirty multisyllabic words were presented to the children either in isolation or in sentence context. Results showed the phonic group had a higher proportion of non-word responses, whereas, the sight-word group had a higher proportion of real word miscues. The same pattern was present in the words in isolation tests as well as in the contextual tests. When the real word miscues of both groups were analyzed, the groups did not differ in regard to miscues which altered passage meaning. Delawter concluded that a child's actual reading strategies are predictable if the particulars of the instructional approach are known. Furthermore, DeLawter contended that the strategies are still visible after an extended period of time (in this case, two years). Thus, the present study found it necessary to observe the actual classroom reading instruction in order to determine whether the children's actual reading strategies were directly patterned after the method by which the children were taught.

A cross-cultural study comparing the oral reading of American and Scottish children was reported by Elder (1971). The Scottish children learned to read at age five and phonics was emphasized while the American children began reading at age six through a sight-word approach. Oral reading samples of 49 Scottish children were compared with the performance of the American children. Results showed the phonic group to be more able to figure out unknown words although they read more slowly, whereas, the sight group was less accurate in identifying words but read more fluently. Mispronunciations and words aided by the examiner were fewer in the phonic group while real-word substitutions and a need for assistance were higher in the sight-word group. This pattern of word recognition errors is similar to the patterns found by both Barr (1972) and DeLawter (1975). In contrast with DeLawter's study, the sight-word group were less likely to make substitutions that resulted in meaning change within the passage than the phonic group. This differs from DeLawter's study where the sight-word group were less likely to make substitutions that resulted in meaning change within the passage than the phonic group. This differs from DeLawter's study where the sight-word group made more real-word miscues but the phonics group's real-word miscues, although fewer, made as much sense in the passages.

Lopardo (1977) set out to investigate the effect of the method of reading instruction on children's word identification strategies through the comparative case study of three children, each instructed by a different instructional method (phonic, sight, combination) by Lopardo over one school year. While other children in the regular kindergarten program engaged in reading readiness activities, the subjects met individually with the investigator and when the subjects were in the room during readiness periods, they worked independently on reading activities prepared by Lopardo. Results for each group may be summarized as follows:

1. The phonics child had initial difficulty blending and oral reading continued to be less fluent. However, the phonic approach exceeded the other two in facilitating the identification of unknown words. When miscues were analyzed, nonsense errors were recorded only for the phonics subject.
2. The sight-word method was easy initially but became increasingly difficult as the number of

words increased. This approach did not facilitate the identification of unknown words.

3. The combination method was the most difficult at first because the child had to learn word parts as well as whole words.

All approaches showed a high degree of graphically similar errors as well as a low percent of contextually appropriate errors. The latter suggests that meaning had not been emphasized in any of the approaches yet Lopardo says that it infers that correct responses rather than contextually appropriate errors were produced. This point seems highly questionable. Secondly, more difference has been found in other studies concerning the word identification strategies of children taught by different instructional methods when the samples were considerably larger (Barr, 1972; Barr, 1975; DeLawter, 1975; Elder, 1971). Thirdly, one wonders why the researcher chose only a phonic method, a sight-word method and a combination of the two approaches. It would seem that a meaning or naturalistic approach should have been compared instead of merely combining the phonics and sight-word methods.

Comparing the Reading Strategies of Good and Poor Readers

In Y. Goodman's (1967) study of the reading behaviour of six beginning readers, she found that better readers were more able to make sound/symbol associations, made fewer regressions and produced a greater percentage of miscues that were both syntactically and semantically acceptable.

In 1972, Jensen analyzed the oral reading behaviour of five good second grade readers, five weak sixth grade readers, and five good sixth grade readers. All subjects read a third grade passage orally. The proficient readers' errors were less graphically similar to the print than the weak readers and the proficient readers produced more syntactically and semantically acceptable miscues. The choice of a third grade passage here seems questionable for in order to assess word identification strategies, all subjects should have been reading at their own instructional levels. Because no assessment of reading level was stated, it is doubtful whether this was so.

Brody (1973) examined the oral reading miscues of six readers: three proficient third graders, two poor fifth graders and one poor sixth grader. She controlled for intellectual ability and reading achievement. All subjects read a sixth grade passage. The proficient readers made fewer errors and showed better use of phonic and graphic information. Little difference was found in the use of syntactic and semantic cues. Over successive segments of the text there was a steady decline in the syntactic and semantic acceptability of responses for the poor readers. Brody concluded that poorer readers relied more heavily on the less complex cues of graphic and phonic information, especially when they became frustrated or fatigued instead of the more sophisticated cues of syntactic, and semantic information. Again, the use of one reading level test is questionable. It appears that all subjects in this study may have been operating at their frustration reading level. If this was so, the information obtained on sound identification strategies should have been explained more carefully and attributed only to the frustration levels of good and poor readers.

In a similar but more extended study, K. Goodman and Burke (1972) included readers of varying levels of proficiency from Grades 2 to 10. Each group included five or six subjects. Groups which were to be compared read the same passage. Results from all comparisons showed similarities in the proficient readers' performances. Proficient readers made the fewest number of miscues, had a higher percentage of semantically and syntactically acceptable miscues, a higher rate of corrections (especially for semantically and syntactically unacceptable errors), and a higher comprehension rating. The amount of graphic and phonic information employed seemed to be a function of grade level as well as proficiency. At the Grade 2 level, the proficient group used more graphophonic information than the average and low groups but from Grade 4 onwards there was little difference between proficiency groups on the use of graphophonic cues. These results held true for all but one comparison: the high Grade 8, low-average 10, high-average 10 and high grade 10 readers where there were no differences among the groups except in the number of corrections made. Again, one's questions about the student's level of reading achievement and the difficulty of the material remains unanswered.

In 1974-75, Cohen examined the oral reading errors of 50 children taught by a phonic method during eight months of the first grade. First, an uncertainty about the relationship between letters and sounds and words was demonstrated by a non-response phase in both the good and poor readers. The good readers tended to go quickly from this non-response phase to a nonsense word miscue phase and finally to a word substitution miscue phase, whereas, the poorer readers gradually decreased the number of nonsense word miscues parallel to an increase in word substitution miscues. Cohen found that the poorer readers tended to use only the first or last letters of a word as cues so their strategies were less systematic as well. While the good readers had a low proportion of meaningful miscues only during early instruction, the poor readers continued to have a low proportion of meaningful miscues.

King (1978) analyzed the differences in the oral reading behaviour of good and poor readers among 61 grade 4 and 100 grade 6 students. Findings revealed no significant difference between the good and poor readers in the number of errors made per 100 words, in the amount of information used from the cue systems, or in the integration of information from two or more cue systems. Other recent studies (Y. Goodman, 1967; Jensen, 1972; Brody, 1973) showed a difference in these strategies but due to small samples were not able to show statistical significance. However, quite a difference was noted between the scores of the good and poor readers in the category assessing the integration of information (graphic, syntactic, and semantic). This study supports Clay's (1968) finding. The area in which most difference was found was correctional behaviour. Good readers made significantly more corrections than poorer readers. Clay's (1968) study showed this same pattern.

Leslie, Lauren, and Patasol (1977) found that when eighth graders read with 95 percent oral reading accuracy, fewer errors which were not semantically acceptable occurred than when the subject's oral reading accuracy was between 90-94 percent. Therefore, this does substantiate the theory that reading levels do affect the word identification strategies readers use and that is the main problem that arises in studies comparing good and poor readers. It is impossible to decide if differences in word identification strategies used by good and poor readers are due to the difficulty of the material and their level of reading achievement. As the difficulty of the text in relation to the reader's level of reading achievement may affect the strategies he uses to process the print, this is an essential consideration. Therefore the present study first established each child's instructional level and then obtained all information on oral reading behaviour at this level.

Beginning Readers' Verbalizations about Reading Strategies

Denny and Weintraub (1966) asked preschool children the question, "what do you have to do to learn how to read in the first grade?' The responses were classified into five categories: (1) no response, (2) unclear, (3) obedience-oriented, (4) other-directed, and (5) self-directed. Categories (1) and (2) contained 34 percent of the responses while categories (3) and (5) contained most of the rest. They concluded that children could verbalize little about the actual strategies used in reading before they encounter the activity. However, one criticism of this conclusion is that young children need to relate to concrete objects and situations. This form of merely questioning is too abstract. They may have been able to verbalize if stimulated by a concrete object or event.

Glass and Burton (1973-74) investigated the skills of successful decoders. Fifteen children from each of grades 2 and 5 were asked to decode a list of unfamiliar words. The examiner tape-recorded student responses. Although many students said they used specific skills that had been taught in the reading programme, the researchers concluded that all the subjects used a letter clustering approach and no formal rules were being utilized. The present study compared the reading strategies being taught in the classroom with the actual strategies the subjects employed in contextual material. Contextual material rather than a words-in-isolation task was chosen because reading strategies differ for the two and the former is a 'real' reading situation. In a words in isolation task, not as many strategies can be used. Then, as in the Glass and Burton (1974) study, the children were asked about the strategies they employ.

Tovey (1976) wished to examine children's understanding of four psycholinguistic concepts. For the study, 30 children, five from each grade from 1 to 6, were selected. Reading as a silent process, reading as a predictive process, reading as a process deriving meaning from language and the use of the three cue systems in reading were examined. Subjects were asked to read a paragraph. If they read it orally (and most did) Tovey concluded they perceived reading as an oral task. This may have been a false assumption as they probably believed he wanted to hear how they read. Eighty-three percent of the children thought they looked at every word while 57 percent believed they looked at each letter, thus not leaving much to prediction, only 43 percent believed reading to be meaningful while 28 percent used only graphophonic cues when decoding unfamiliar words. The present study will include questioning on similar features as part of the child's concept of strategies.

None of the studies examined provided an in-depth investigation of children's concepts of reading strategies and how actual behaviour and verbalizations were shaped by classroom factors. The present study investigated this in as much depth as possible.

Link of this Study to the Literature

The overwhelming conclusion one comes to after surveying the literature is that actual data is scarce and much of it is conflicting. Many of the studies can be criticized both for inadequate procedure and faulty conclusions. To date, numerous questions concerning beginning readers' strategies remain unanswered. Therefore, the present study hopes to extend our knowledge of children's reading strategies by overcoming weaknesses found in previous research.

1. Many studies asked young children abstract questions for which the children could not verbalize answers. Since young children find it easier to answer questions if a concrete aid is provided, in the present study a reading situation occurred before any questions were asked. Then the interviewer could refer back to the actual reading situation to facilitate the children's responses. Similarly, rewording and probing was permitted to help the children to

verbalize and to clarify their responses

2. Since studies seemed to lose much valuable information by imposing classifications before the data was collected, the present study prevented this distortion of information by allowing patterns to emerge after the data was examined.
3. Although numerous studies have investigated reading strategies by employing only words in isolation tasks, this is not an accurate measure. More and sometimes different reading strategies are brought into play in an actual reading situation involving words in context. Therefore, the present study employed only words in paragraph context to imply reading strategies.
4. A difficulty, evident in studies comparing good and poor readers, was failure to establish each reader's instructional level. Frequently the poorer readers seemed to be reading at frustration level while the better readers were reading at instructional level. Because reading strategies can be different at these two levels, the present study sought to establish each student's instructional level and employ only material at that level for inferring reading strategies.
5. The teacher's concept of reading strategies was not investigated in any of the studies reviewed and this appears to be an oversight. The

present study will examine the teachers' concept of reading strategies for it is believed to be most relevant.

To conclude, the present study hopes to overcome the previous stated weakness found in the literature and provide a more in-depth investigation of beginning readers' concepts of reading strategies.

Chapter 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

An ethnographic design was selected since the study was to focus on many interrelating factors in a natural classroom setting. Two questionnaires, one for the students and another for the teacher, were developed to collect information and an observational list was drawn up to guide the classroom observation. This chapter describes the sample, the instruments employed, the procedure, the pilot study, and the data analysis.

Sample

After observing four Grade 1 classrooms, one classroom from an Alberta school board was chosen because it most closely met the required criteria predetermined by the researcher. The classroom required was to be a 'typical' classroom in that the teacher was not characterized by an extreme approach of either rigid traditionalism or radicalism, but could best be described as moderate, experienced, and articulate. The children were to be from a non-streamed classroom in which they were grouped by ability for reading instruction and a recognized basal reading series was employed as the core of their reading program. The first three classrooms visited (although identified by the school boards as meeting the criteria) were not selected as one did not have a large enough sample, another was from a high socioeconomic area, and in the third classroom the children were not taught in groups but were taught as a whole class. The fourth classroom met all the criteria except one, the teacher had taught only one year so could not be considered very experienced. Yet she was recognized by the school's principal as being competent.

The subjects for the study were 12 Grade 1 children. The size of the sample was restricted due to the amount of data that was to be collected on each subject. Still, 12 is a large enough number in which patterns can emerge (Miller, 1975). All subjects had English as their native language. Of the 12 children in the sample, six were high achievers in reading and six were low achievers in reading. A difference in reading ability has previously been indicated as a cause of different strategies being used while reading. Because the present study wished to investigate this claim, random sampling was not possible. No formal reading tests were employed to select the low and high achievers in reading. Instead, the teacher's judgment was used as recent research on evaluation has shown that teacher judgment is probably the best indicator of young children's achievement (Miller, 1975). Kermonian (1962) found that teacher ratings of students correlated .73 with scores on the Metropolitan Readiness Test and errors made by teachers were over-rating of students. In the present study all children in the high achievers reading group scored an A while children in the low achievers reading group scored a B or C on the Metropolitan Readiness Test (Table 2). Similarly, the students in the high group (selected by the teacher) in all but one case had a higher percentile rank on the reading words and sentences sections of the Stanford Early Achievement Test - Level II than the students chosen by the teacher for the low achieving reading group (Table 3).

Instruments

Standardized Tests

Three informal reading inventories were used in order to first establish each student's instructional reading level and then to obtain a sufficient number of miscues at this level.

1. Standard Reading Inventory (McCracken, 1966)

This is an individually administered reading test with two forms and measures reading levels from a pre-primer to a seventh reader level. Passages of increasing difficulty were read by the subjects in order to establish instructional reading level. This test was chosen as a measure of reading achievement because it is easily administered, has high validity and reliability, and was well standardized. Recently, educators (Allington & Gould,

Table 2

Teacher Grouping of Subjects and Subjects' Scores on the Metropolitan Readiness Test

High Group	
Subject	Readiness Score
1	A
2	A
3	A
4	A
5	A
6	A

Low Group	
Subject	Readiness Score
7	B
8	B
9	B
10	B
11	B
12	C

Table 3

Teacher Grouping of Subjects and Subjects' Scores on the Stanford Early School Achievement Test - Level II

High Group

Subject	Percentile Rank on Words	Percentile Rank on Sentences
1	86	84
2	72	8
3	94	96
4	76	74
5	72	66
6	78	72

Low Group

Subject	Percentile Rank on Words	Percentile Rank on Sentences
7	50	46
8	80	1
9	50	42
10	50	8
11	64	56
12	56	46

1976; Tortelli, 1976) have indicated that approximately 20 miscues are sufficient to infer children's reading strategies. Since not all children made this many miscues at their instructional reading level on the Standard Reading Inventory, passages from two further tests were employed when necessary.

2. Gray Oral Reading Test (Gray, 1967)

The Gray Oral Reading Test consists of a series of 13 passages of progressive levels of difficulty from pre-primer to college level. Passages from Forms A and B were used to provide more reading material at the subjects' instructional reading level which had already been established by the Standard Reading Inventory. Reviews (Bliesmer, 1968) confirm that the test was carefully developed and constructed.

3. Classroom Reading Inventory (Silvaroli, 1969)

This informal reading inventory has three equivalent forms and can be used from the two to eight reading level. No data is available on either its reliability or standardization. However, it was employed only to provide additional passages at the previously established instructional reading level.

Questionnaires

The Children's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire (Appendix A) was developed by the author to be administered individually in a semi-structured interview. Open-ended questioning was employed in order to allow the interviewer to probe or rephrase questions when misunderstanding on the part of the subject was apparent or when more information was required. Reid's (1966) research suggested this form of questioning to be most applicable and through this, it was believed a more complete concept of reading strategies could be obtained. Since concrete objects help children to understand questions and to attend to the task (Downing, 1970), in many of the questions the interviewer referred back to passages that the children had previously read.

Questions 4 and 5 evolved from Tovey (1976), while Question 6 was first employed by Reid (1966). McLaughlin (1978) presented ideas for Questions 8 and 11. The other questions evolved from the author's own background. Most of the questions were followed by "why?" or "why not?" or "Is there anything else?"

The Teacher's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire (Appendix B) was developed by the author to be administered to the classroom teacher at the end of the study when it could no longer affect what was occurring in reading sessions in the classroom. This questionnaire was used to analyze the strategies that the teacher verbalized as being necessary in reading and to compare the teacher's verbalizations with the actual strategies she emphasized when teaching reading as well as with the strategies the children employed.

All the questions asked of the teacher were similar to those asked of the children. Numbers 3 and 4 again evolved from Tovey (1976). While Question 6 was first used by Reid (1966). The others were believed necessary in order to discover the teacher's complete concept of reading strategies.

Procedure

After the two questionnaires were constructed and the informal reading inventories were selected, the interview conditions and observational guidelines were planned. Next the Children's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire was piloted and subsequently revised. Finally, the main study was conducted. This section discusses the pilot study, and the interview and observational guidelines of the main study.

The Pilot Study

Prior to the main study a pilot study was conducted in order to determine whether Grade 1 children could understand the questions asked in the Children's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire. Six children, three high achieving readers and three low achieving readers from a Grade 1 class in an Alberta school board were selected. Teacher judgment determined the children who were to participate. Each private interview took approximately 20 minutes and was tape recorded. An attempt was made by the interviewer to record the children's responses but when this appeared to affect the rapport adversely, the interviewer decided to continue using only the tape recorder and transcribe all responses after the interviews. The subjects had little difficulty answering the questions and a variety of responses was evident. Afterwards, some word changes were made to clarify questions which had to be explained in different ways to the children during the pilot study and several questions which did not provide useful information were deleted.

The Main Study

The entire study involved two weeks of observation of reading lessons in a Grade 1 classroom. After three days had been spent observing and establishing rapport, the researcher held a private interview with each subject. Each subject was asked to read orally and then answer the questions from the *Children's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire*. On the final day of the study, the *Teacher's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire* was administered to the classroom teacher. This questionnaire was left until the last day so the teacher would not be unduly affected by the study's emphasis and attempt to change the usual strategies she employed when teaching.

The Interview

Rapport had been established with the children in the classroom for several days before any interviews were conducted. Each interview was conducted privately in a room separate from the classroom. The interviews lasted approximately one-half hour and were tape recorded. About one-half of the children were present for several sessions over the period of two weeks, as this was necessary to obtain sufficient miscues to analyze their reading strategies. However, the Children's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire was always administered at the first session following approximately ten minutes of oral reading. It was administered after the oral reading so reference could be made to actual instances in the passages in order to help the children respond to the questions. 'Miscue', a technical term used in reading theory, is applied to a reader's divergences from the written text. The term 'miscue' was devised as an alternative to the negative connotations of the term 'error' since reading is a risk-taking process and can never be miscue free (Smith, 1971). It is believed that miscues serve as "windows" (Goodman, 1972) on the reading strategies employed by readers.

The data on children's actual reading strategies was acquired by having them orally read selected passages from the Standard Reading Inventory (Form A) until their instructional level was established. Once this level was established, the children continued to read further passages at this level from the Standard Reading Inventory (Form B), the Gray Standard Reading Inventory (Forms A and B), and the Silvaroli Reading Inventory (Forms A, B, and C) until at least 20 miscues were made. It was essential to obtain all miscues at the child's instructional level because miscues, and therefore strategies, might differ at the child's frustration level in reading. Due to the attention span of the children and the number of passages that had to be read before a sufficient number of miscues were collected, many of the children spent several sessions with the interviewer over the period of the study.

The interviewer began each interview by saying "I'd like you to read some stories for me and as you read, I'm going to mark everything you do right and everything you do wrong on the copy of your story that I have here. Do you understand? This is story number one." The tape recorder was already on when the child entered the room. If an inquiry was made, the interviewer said that she had it on so she could remember how well the child read. After the child read a story, the interviewer would play it back so the child could hear his voice. The child was put at ease with the tape recording session.

When the child had read enough selections to establish his instructional level and provide a sufficient number of miscues for analysis, or after approximately ten minutes, the interviewer ended the oral reading part. The Children's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire then followed. The interviewer started by saying, "I'd like to find out some things about the way you read. Do you think you can help me?" At the conclusion of the questionnaire, the interviewer played back a small portion of the interview, again allowing each subject to hear his voice on tape and ensuring that the interview had, in fact, been recorded. No writing of subjects' answers was done during the pilot study. Instead, all tapes were transcribed at the end of each day when the interviewer's observations could still be recalled.

Classroom Observational Guidelines

Two weeks were spent observing classroom reading situations. Observation of the children and teacher was made in different reading settings (teacher-whole class, teacher-small group, teacher-individual, child-child interaction, etc.) and for various situations (oral reading, silent reading, reading instruction, teacher explanation, teacher questioning). The observer took detailed notes about the activity, its duration, the response mode, the specific skill emphasized, and particularly information about the reading strategies employed or expressed by the children and teacher. This description of classroom reading activities was supplemented by an examination of other factors.

The total organization of each reading group was investigated and information was collected on the following:

1. The criteria used for forming the groups.
2. The seating arrangement of the groups.
3. The allocation of time to the groups.
4. The teacher's instructional role with each group.
5. The criteria the teacher used to select materials (textbooks, audio, worksheets, etc.) for each group.
6. The use of classroom and library books by each group.
7. The strategies emphasized in the basal reading series of each group.
8. The strategies emphasized by the teacher in teaching each group.

Data Analysis

Three separate steps were involved in analyzing the data: (1) the categorization of miscues, (2) the categorization of interview responses, and (3) the description of observed classroom interacting factors.

Categorization of Miscues

A modified Reading Miscue Inventory (Goodman & Burke, 1972) was used to analyze each child's reading miscues. This system evolved from the Goodman *Taxonomy of Cues and Miscues in Reading* (1965) and involves classifying miscues at three linguistic levels; the phoneme-grapheme or letter-sound level, the word or morpheme level, and the syntactic (grammatical) or semantic (meaning level). The *Reading Miscue Inventory* has been the basis of recent studies which have tried to analyze children's reading miscues qualitatively (Weber, 1970; Shandling, 1970; Cromer & Weiner, 1966; Barr, 1972). Early analyses of errors was done quantitatively and only quite recently did researchers begin to analyze errors qualitatively. The *Reading Miscue Inventory* is one of the few formal tests that provides qualitative analysis of errors in order to ascertain the reader's actual strategies.

The following types of miscues were analyzed:

1. Substitutions - the reader says a different word than the word in the text.

	Text	Reader
Example:	Dick jumps.	Dick sings.

2. Insertions - the reader adds a word to the text.

	Text	Reader
Example:	Dick jumps.	Dick jumps up.

3. Mispronunciations - the reader mispronounces the word in the text thus producing a nonsense word.

	Text	Reader
Example:	Dick jumps.	Dick jamps.

4. Non-Response - the reader hesitates for at least

five seconds and either skips the word or says he does not know that word.

	Text	Reader
Example:	Dick jumps.	Dick _____.

5. Omission - the reader leaves out a word but does not hesitate for five seconds.

	Text	Reader
Example:	Dick jumps away.	Dick jumps ____.

Of the nine questions that are to be asked of a miscue (according to the Goodman & Burke Reading Miscue Inventory, 1972), four questions were deleted as they did not provide particularly useful information for the present study. These questions involved categorizing the miscues according to dialect, intonation, grammatical function, and meaning change. An explanation of why each category was deleted, follows:

1. Dialect - no subject involved in the study had a regional or social dialect which was responsible for the subject's miscues so this category was deemed unnecessary.
2. Intonation - While pitch, stress, and juncture are important, they do not provide much information on actual strategies at the Grade 1 level so it was considered unnecessary to focus on intonation.
3. Grammatical Function - the category of Grammatical Acceptability provided sufficient information

concerning whether a miscue fits within the syntactic organization. Thus, the more specific information of Grammatical Function was not needed because it overlapped the former category.

4. Meaning Change - Semantic Acceptability and Meaning Change overlap as well. For the purpose of this study whether the miscue changed the author's intended meaning did not seem as important as whether the miscue made sense. Grade 1 children might not understand the former but should be capable of the latter from their knowledge of language.

The remaining five categories which were employed to analyze miscues made by subjects in this study are now briefly described (see Table 4).

1. Graphic Similarity - the reader's miscue bears a direct physical resemblance to the actual word in the text.

	Text	Reader
Examples:	talk	talked
	potion	portion

2. Sound Similarity - the reader's miscue is directly related to the sound letter associations he has made.

	Text	Reader
Examples:	west	vest
	lave	lathe

Table 4

Modified Reading Miscue Inventory Coding Sheet

Reader	Date	Selection
Teacher	Class	School

	Miscue Number											
	Reader											
	Text											
											Column Total	Percentage	Question Total
1	Graphic Similarity	Y											
		P											
		N											
2	Sound Similarity	Y											
		P											
		N											
3	Correction												
4	Grammatical Acceptability												
5	Semantic Acceptability												

3. Correction - if a reader corrects himself after a miscue, this behaviour gives an indication of how he is processing information and whether he is looking for syntactic and semantic acceptability.

	Text	Reader
Example:	He ran away fast.	He ran away far. (c) fast

4. Grammatical Acceptability - this category determines whether the miscue fits within the organization of part of the sentence, the whole-sentence, and in relation to preceding and subsequent discourse.

	Text	Reader
Example: acceptable:	Gorillas eat people.	Grapes eat people.
not acceptable:	Gorillas eat people.	Going eat people.

5. Semantic Acceptability - the miscue makes sense at either a part-sentence, whole-sentence, or discourse level.

	Text	Reader
Example: acceptable:	She dug in her flower garden.	She dug in her flower bed.
not acceptable:	She dug in her flower garden.	She dug in her flower garbage.

Inter-Rater Reliability

All miscues of the 12 children involved in the study were analyzed by another rater to establish the reliability of the measuring instrument. There was perfect agreement between the two raters with respect to the classification of each miscue.

Categorization of Interview Responses

After all responses were recorded on the Children's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire, protocol sheets were rechecked with the tapes. The author recorded the 12 responses for each question on one sheet. Through examining these individual responses, categories emerged and the responses were then classified for each group according to the particular questions' categories. The patterns that emerged after this further classification are described in Chapter 4. The answers to the Teacher's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire will then be examined and compared as well.

Description of Observed Classroom Interacting Factors

The patterns that emerged from the Children's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire were compared with each of the following:

1. The children's actual reading strategies as analyzed by the Reading Miscue Inventory (Goodman & Burke, 1972).
2. The reading strategies which the teacher discussed in the Teacher's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire.
3. The actual reading strategies that the teacher employed in reading instruction.
4. The other observed classroom interacting factors

listed in the observational guidelines.

Summary

Two weeks were spent observing classroom reading situations during which time the observer took detailed notes about the activities, their duration, the response mode, the specific skill emphasized, and particularly information about the children's and teacher's reading strategies. During this time, six low achievers in reading and six high achievers in reading were selected by the classroom teacher and were interviewed by the researcher. All subjects read orally so their instructional reading levels could be established and their reading miscues could be analyzed. Afterwards, the children answered the questions on the Children's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire. At the end of the study the teacher answered similar questions for the researcher. Both questionnaires had been tested and revised during a pilot study. Informal discussions with the children and the teacher were used to interpret and clarify their comments and strategies. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the actual classroom observations, interviews, and the analysis of the children's oral reading.

Chapter 4

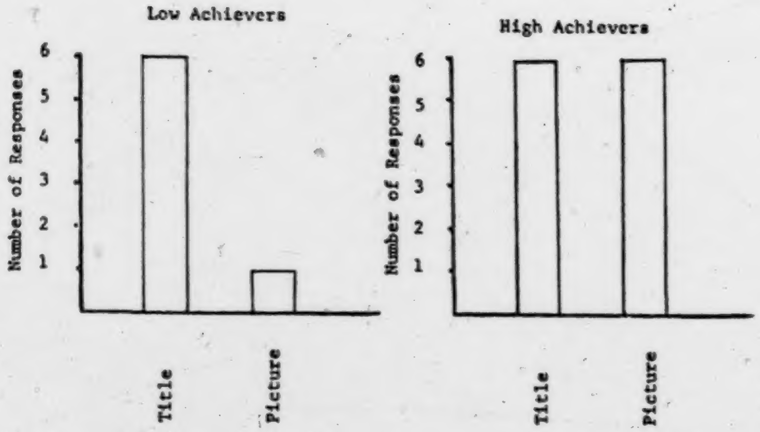
ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

This chapter has three main sections. The first section presents a summary of the children's verbalizations about reading strategies. To aid clarity, the findings for each question are presented in the form of bar graphs. A brief introduction to these graphs highlights the trends that were observed. (Further discussion of these findings is incorporated into the third section). The second section discusses the children's actual reading strategies which the analysis of miscues provided. This discussion is supplemented by individual and group percentages for each part of the modified Reading Miscue Inventory. The third section discusses patterns that emerged when the classroom interrelated factors were examined and actual examples are cited for illustration whenever helpful.

Children's Verbalizations about Reading Strategies

The results of the Children's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire are presented on the following pages. Each group's responses are summarized on a bar graph beside the main question asked so comparisons can be made. Upon examining these results, two trends emerged. First, the limited nature of the low group's concept of

1. How do you know what a story will be about before you read it?



2. Do you look at pictures when you read?

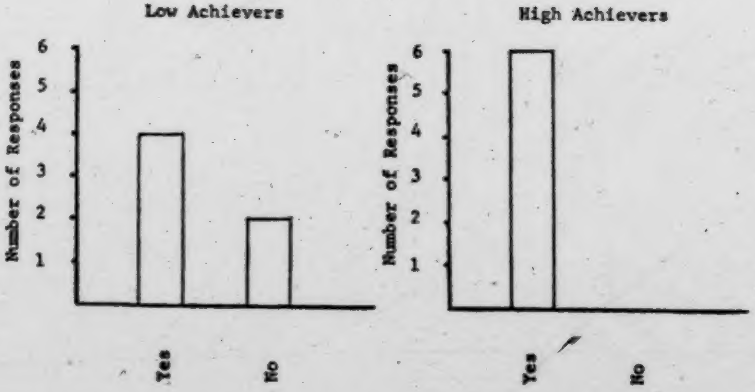
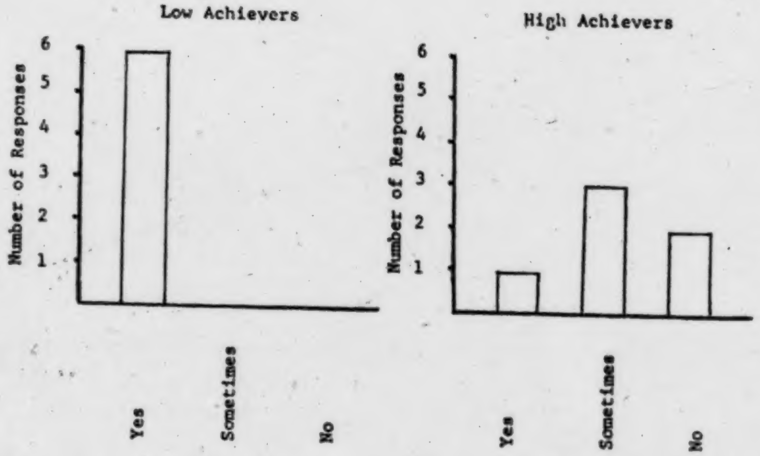


Figure 1. Responses to children's concept of reading strategies questionnaire.

3. Do you read out loud when you read?



4. Do you look at every letter when you read?

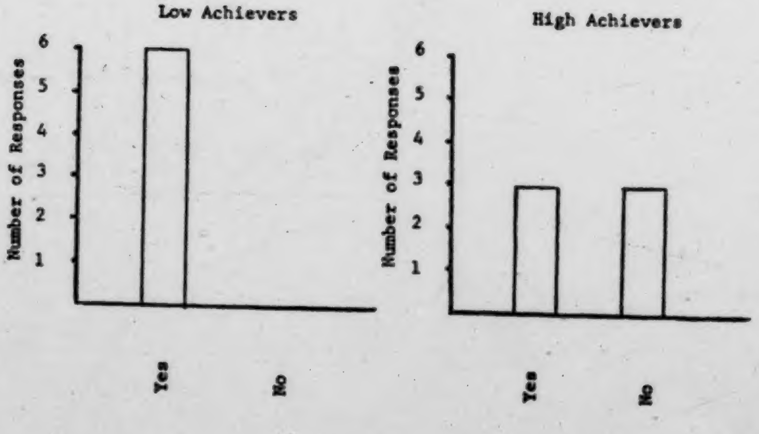
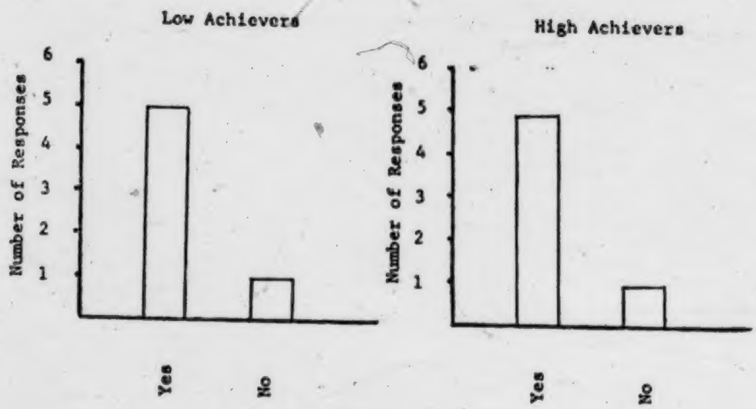


Figure 1. (continued)

5. Do you look at every word when you read?



6. What do you do when you do not know a word?

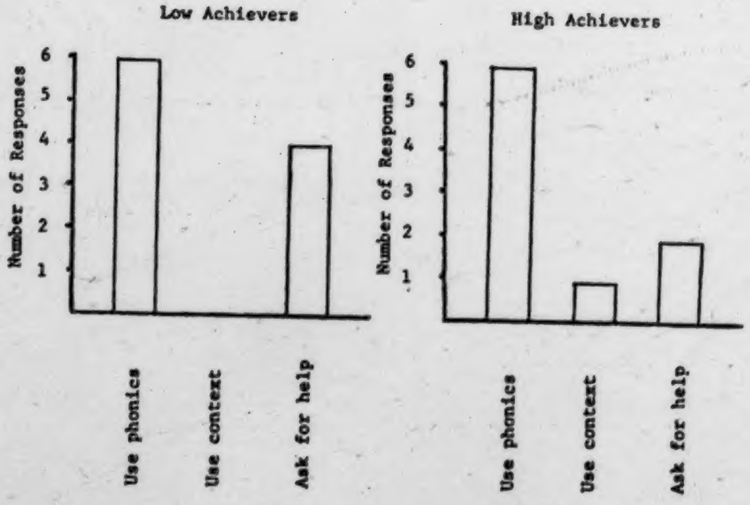
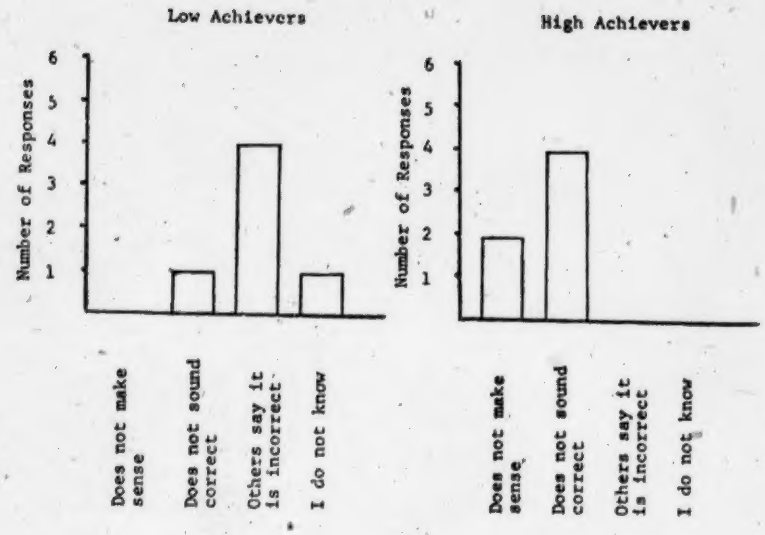


Figure 1. (continued)

7. How can you tell if you make a mistake when you are reading?



8. Are you a good reader?

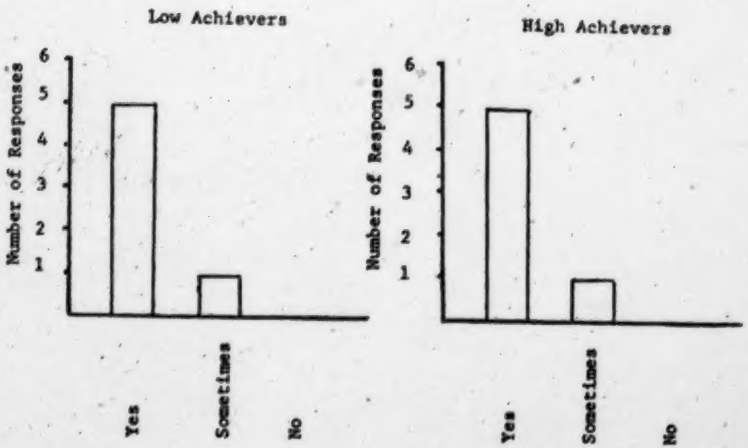
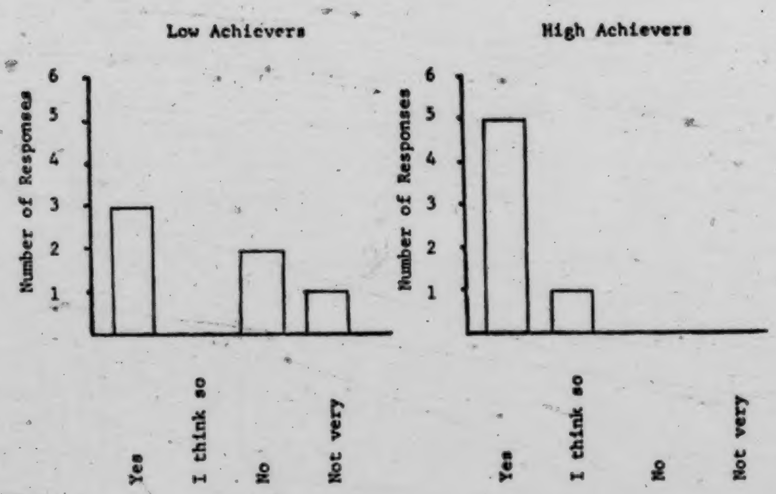


Figure 1. (continued)

9. Does your teacher think you are a good reader?



10. Who is the best reader in your class?

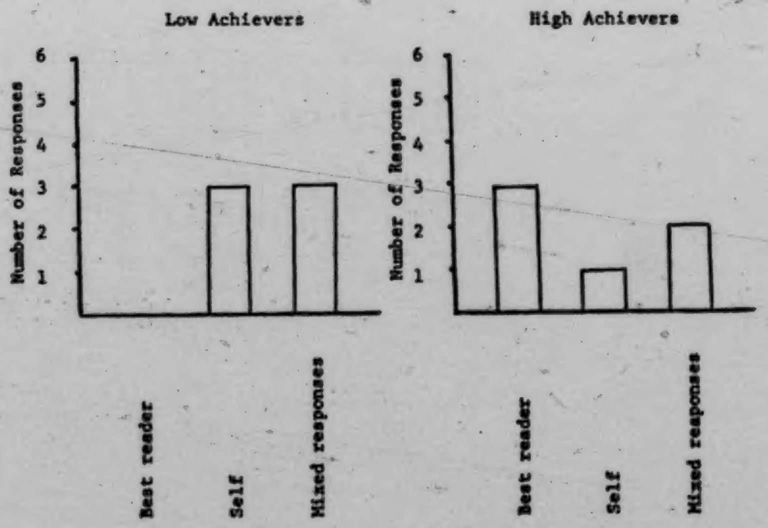
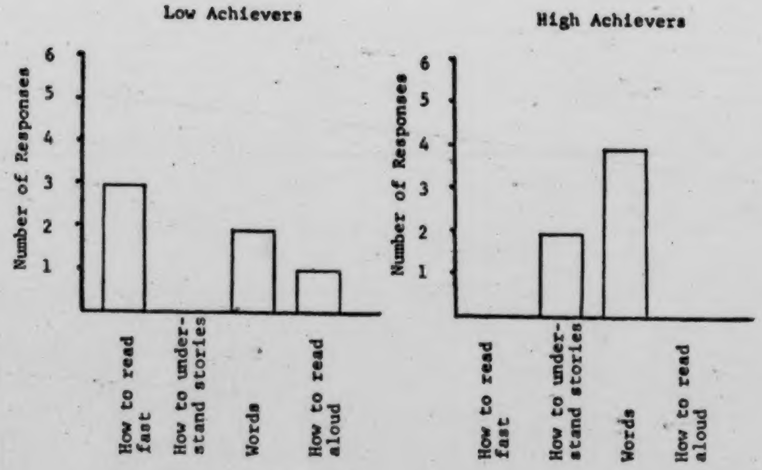


Figure 1. (continued)

11. What do good readers have to know?



12. What will you have to do to read better?

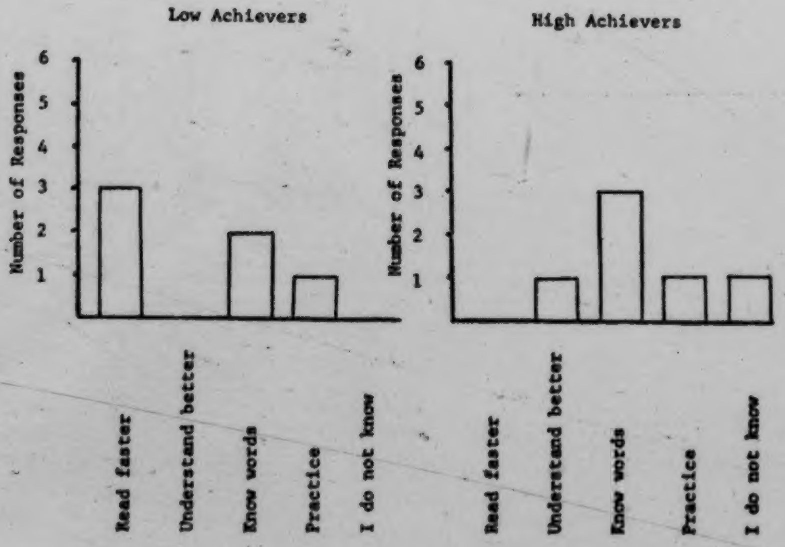
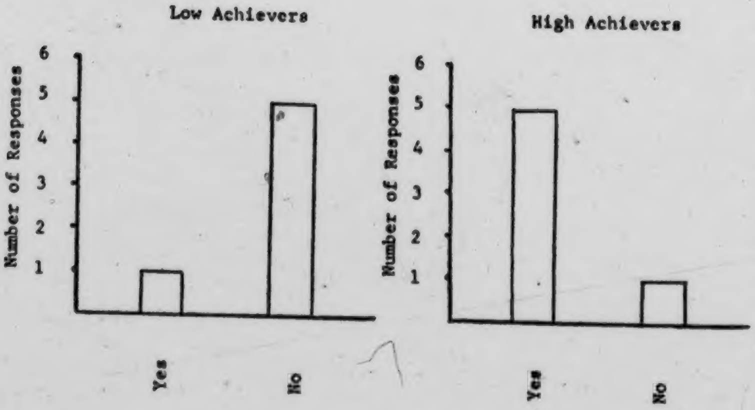


Figure 1. (continued)

13. Does your teacher help you to learn to read?



14. Why does your teacher put children into different groups to read?

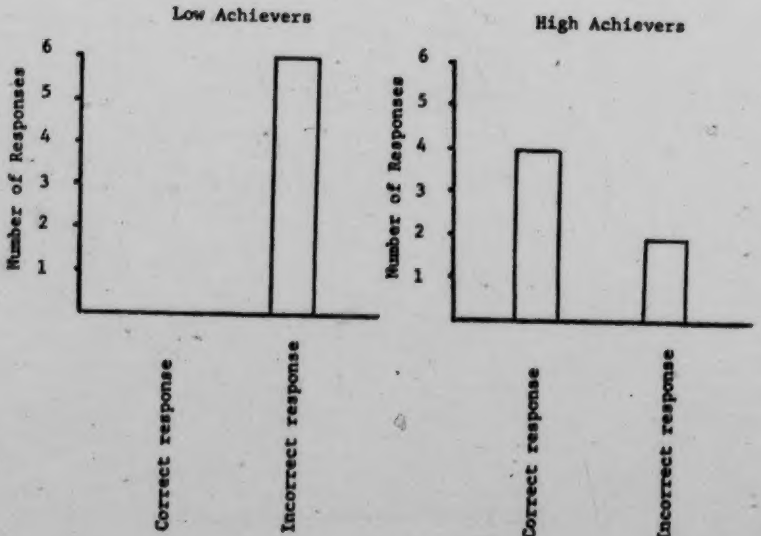


Figure 1. (continued)

reading strategies is demonstrated in their answers to Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7, while the limitations of both group's concepts of reading strategies can be seen in Questions 5 and 6. Secondly, the responses to Questions 8 to 14 inclusive indicate, through their diversity, that the children seem confused about the nature of effective reading strategies. Sometimes the responses of the high achievers were more meaningful, but even with them, there was little consensus. Not only was there a variety of responses among the subjects, but the responses of individuals were frequently inconsistent with their other responses and the strategies they employed.

One question which deserves to be mentioned separately is Number 13. In Number 13 there is a dramatic division between the two groups about whether or not their teacher helps them to learn to read. Since most of the high achievers say she does help while most of the low achievers reply that she does not, it seems that the nature of reading instruction must have shaped these beliefs and needs to be investigated in relation to them.

Children's Actual Reading Strategies

After the miscues for both high and low achievers were analyzed according to the modified *Reading Miscue Inventory*, the patterns exhibited by the two groups were found to be quite similar (see Tables 5, 6, and 7). Both groups relied primarily upon graphic similarity (sight-word

Table 5

Percentages on High Achievers' Miscue Analysis

Student	Graphic Similarity			Sound Similarity			Correction	Grammatical Acceptability			Semantic Acceptability		
	Y	P	N	Y	P	N		Y	P	N	Y	P	N
S1	76.9	3.8	3.8		15.5		11.5	34.6	15.4	50.0	23.1	15.4	61.5
S2	42.9	21.4	21.4	3.6	10.7		25.0	50.0		50.0	39.3		60.7
S3	61.9	14.3	14.3		9.5		9.5	71.4	4.8	23.8	52.4		47.6
S4	44.4	25.9	7.4	3.8	18.5		25.9	33.3	3.7	63.0	33.3	3.7	63.0
S5	62.9	6.5	12.9	16.1	1.6		3.2	38.7	9.67	51.6	25.8	22.6	51.6
S6	78.3	4.3	8.7	8.7			26.1	56.5	17.4	26.	43.5	21.7	34.8

Y means Yes.

P means Partial.

N means No.

Table 6

Percentages on Low Achievers' Miscue Analysis

Student	Graphic Similarity			Sound Similarity			Correction	Grammatical Acceptability			Semantic Acceptability		
	Y	P	N	Y	P	N		Y	P	N	Y	P	N
S7	33.3	28.6	35.7			2.4	19.0	47.6	9.5	42.9	47.6	9.5	42.9
S8	82.0	4.5	4.5	4.5		4.5		59.1	4.5	36.4	22.7		77.3
S9	69.3	26.9	3.8					76.9	3.8	19.3	23.1		76.9
S10	72.0	8.0	20.0				24.0	60.0	12.0	28.0	28.0	8.0	64.0
S11	45.8	41.3	4.3	4.3	4.3		26.1	30.4	8.7	60.9	26.1	8.7	65.2
S12	44.0	32.0	8.0	8.0	8.0			40.0	16.0	44.0	24.0	12.0	64.0

Y means Yes.

P means Partial.

N means No.

Table 7

Percentage Means of High and Low Achievers on Miscue Analysis

Graphic Similarity			Sound Similarity			Correction	Grammatical Acceptability			Semantic Acceptability		
						High Achievers						
Y	P	N	Y	P	N		Y	P	N	Y	P	N
61.2	12.7	11.4	5.4	9.3		16.9	47.4	8.5	44.8	36.2	10.6	53.2
73.9			14.7				55.9			46.8		
						Low Achievers						
Graphic Similarity			Sound Similarity			Correction	Grammatical Acceptability			Semantic Acceptability		
Y	P	N	Y	P	N		Y	P	N	Y	P	N
57.73	23.55	18.72	2.8	2.05	1.15	11.51	52.3	9.08	38.58	28.58	6.37	65.05
81.28			4.85				61.38			34.95		

Y means Yes.

P means Partial.

N means No.

approach) as their main cue and were reluctant to attempt to identify words using sound similarity (phonic approach). If the sight-word approach was not successful, the students usually tried no other strategy. When the phonic approach was attempted, it was rarely successful. However, the high group more frequently tried to use sound similarity when graphic similarity failed to produce the desired response and this group was more capable of employing the strategy.

This finding is hardly surprising since the method employed in the classroom was almost exclusively a sight-word approach. Although subjects verbalized during the interview that they should 'sound out words', in actuality their classroom reading instruction focused on this knowledge very little and in an isolated fashion. This characteristic of their instruction may well account for the fact that the children were not able, for the most part, to apply phonic knowledge effectively when dealing with unknown words.

It was found that both groups relied more upon grammatical acceptability (whether a word's grammatical function is appropriate in the particular context) than semantic acceptability (whether a word makes sense in the context) while reading. Yet, once again the high group was more successful in employing these strategies. As a group, they also used semantic acceptability more than the lower group. This would indicate they were attempting to make more sense out of what was being read. Because the meaningfulness of reading was not stressed during classroom reading instruction (discussion later), it seems that the lower group is hardly aware of this aspect of reading while the higher group either through previous experience or the ability to gain insight into their activities, views reading as slightly more meaningful.

Related to the slightly different emphases placed on meaning by the two groups is the fact that all the subjects in the high group employed some self-correction, whereas, only half the subjects in the low group used this. If one is looking for meaning and produces a miscue which does not make sense, then an alternative will usually be sought. But if one is merely saying the words without any regard for meaning, self-correction is unlikely to occur. Again, the lack of meaningfulness in the classroom reading instruction may well account for this situation.

To conclude, what most characterized both groups of readers was the limited extent to which they could employ various reading strategies. This led to the children appearing confused about reading strategies. Neither group dealt effectively with unknown words and both groups demonstrated reading strategies that appear to be directly related to the sight-word approach taught in the classroom. As well, both group's limited focus on meaning may also be due to the nature of their reading instruction. Although the children had the beginnings of other strategies (e.g., phonics, context, self-correction), these strategies had not developed well enough to have become a constructive part of their actual reading. However, the high achievers could integrate these other strategies slightly more successfully than the low achievers.

Numerous discrepancies appeared between the verbalized and actual strategies of individuals in both the low and high achievers in reading. The most prevalent one was children saying that they would sound out an unknown word. Few ever employed this strategy. Again, it seemed that they were unable to integrate this with their sight-word approach.

Interrelated Classroom Factors

The overall impression one had after investigating both the children's verbalizations about reading strategies and their actual reading strategies was how limited and inconsistent these strategies actually were. These inconsistencies were apparent in the teacher's verbalizations and actual behaviour as well. Therefore, the starting point for the discussion of interrelated classroom factors is the teacher's own beliefs about reading strategies.

The following sections show the pattern that emerged from the observation of classroom instruction which seems to account for the development of these inconsistent reading strategies.

Teacher's Beliefs about Reading Strategies

The teacher did not appear to have given much thought to the actual reading strategies herself. Although she occasionally mentioned reading for understanding, both her method and verbalizations reflected more of a decoding emphasis. She seemed uncertain about the reading strategies she wished to encourage in the children and why they were important. A few examples from the Teacher's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire will help to illustrate these points. (R stands for researcher. T stands for teacher).

> R: Should reading be a silent or oral activity, or both?
>
> T: Both. The main reason is some children can comprehend easily silently but not orally. They concentrate too much on the words.

Although the teacher believed that Grade 1 children needed to practice oral and silent reading, her reasoning for this seems faulty. The children should be able to understand a story whether they read it orally or silently. It is not quite clear either what the teacher meant when she said "They concentrate too much on the words." Did this imply that the children should not be concentrating on the the words? How would silent reading prevent them from concentrating on the words?

Another instance of confusion between oral and silent reading follows:

> T: . . . they do mouth the words and I've tried to stop that. Also, mine point to the words and the others (teachers) won't allow that.

Many first grade children experience difficulty internalizing speech so they frequently 'mumble' the words (subvocalize). The fact that the teacher has tried to prevent subvocalizing shows she does not understand its purpose as a stage of transition for many children and she could be hindering the children's reading progress by having them concentrate on this minor detail.

When the children were asked, "Do you read out loud when you read?", all of the lower group replied that they did. It seems that they thought of reading primarily as an oral activity, even though oral and silent reading seemed to be equally emphasized during the two week observational period. Could it be that oral reading was stressed much more during the first part of the year than silent reading? If so, these children may have been having difficulty making the transition from oral to silent reading even though their teacher encouraged them not to "mouth the words." This could be true since the high achievers had more varied responses. Or maybe by "out loud" these children actually meant subvocalizing or reading out loud to themselves. Another possibility is that the low achievers really received little practice in reading silently. Although they would be told to read a page silently in the reading group, most of the children merely glanced at the page and immediately raised their hands so they could read orally for everyone. In reality, little silent reading occurred.

The following exchange again reflects some teacher confusion.

R: Do you encourage the children to look at each letter as they read?

T: I would say when they begin oral reading . . . no. I'm pretty big on sight reading, but this has its place.

R: Why should children look at each letter?

T: It's important not to discourage them initially . . . but later looking at each letter has its place.

Did the teacher mean that reading is a two-stage process in which one teaches sight-words and then teaches phonics? Her first comment seems to indicate that. However, the second comment was inconsistent. Perhaps she meant that both approaches could be focused on at the same time. Even after more prodding, the answer to this question was not clear to the researcher or (it appeared) to the teacher. (At this point it is worth noting that the teacher responded hesitatingly to most questions asked and her answers frequently seemed tentative or uncertain.)

In examining the children's responses, similar inconsistencies are mirrored. When asked if they looked at every letter when reading, five out of six children in each group believed they did, while a sixth said only if the word was not known. (It is interesting to note that in each case the sixth answer belonged to the best reader in the group.) When questioned as to why they would look at each letter, all the high group said it was so they would know the words while two children in the low group said it was so they would know the letters. This indicates a low level of understanding of the reading process which would lead to developing limited and inadequate strategies. When questioned further on whether they needed to look at every letter, all of the low group believed it necessary, whereas, only half the high group thought it essential. The student who did not believe it was necessary to look at each letter had perhaps developed more advanced strategies (e.g., sequentially chunking letters together into known word parts or more selective sampling of graphic information) for reading.

Most of the children believed it necessary to look at every word as they read, thus denying any attempt to employ context and sample graphic information more efficiently. The teacher was asked:

R: Do you encourage the children to look at each word as they read?

T: Yes . . . I guess so.

R: Why?

T: If you don't look at each word, you may lose some meaning. Even at the early stages, they're learning about sentence structure.

Here the teacher seems unvertain. Then she quite rightly says meaning "may" be lost if one does not look at each word. However, her last comment goes against what is known about children's language ability and reading. It is well-recognized that children's own knowledge of the structure of oral language helps them to read and not vice versa.

The following question again probes to see if the teacher encourages the children to predict or use context. The response appears to indicate confusion on the part of the classroom teacher between using predicting as a strategy and using the sight-word method.

R: Do you ever have the children guess what an unknown word might be?

T: Definitely yes. Sometimes from the topic I have them remember from example words. They remember words better then.

Remembering words is not at all the same as predicting words. (Remembering indicates a sight-word approach.) When the children were asked what they did when they did not know a word, not surprisingly only one child from the high achievers in reading mentioned predicting in the answer (Question 6).

Sometimes this uncertainty about reading strategies led the teacher to verbalize one thing, yet act in a contradictory manner.

R: What do you do when a child does not know a word?

T: I would like them to be able to recall. If they're reading well, they'll remember it.

In fact, what happened in the classroom was that, as soon as a student hesitated, the teacher would say the unknown word. This action may account, in large part, for the students' (both high and low achievers') reluctance and then inability to use appropriate reading strategies for identifying unknown words on the reading tasks presented by the researcher.

From the examples cited, one can see that the teacher's own beliefs about reading strategies appear somewhat uncertain and this uncertainty seems to be mirrored in the students. This, and the fact that most of the low achievers in reading did not believe that the teacher was helping them to learn to read (Question 13) brings the investigation to examine just what factors in the nature of instruction, promoted these views.

Limited Purpose Established for Reading

Educators recognize the need for students realizing purposes for reading. The purposes may be either of a general type as realizing the purpose of the activity in its broadest sense, e.g., informing, persuading, entertaining, or the purposes may be the more specific purposes established for doing a particular reading activity. However, in the present study there seems to be a lack of understanding of the purpose for reading among the students. Reading situations were routine and appeared to have the narrow purpose of completing the task at hand. The children were quick to realize this as some of their responses on the questionnaire demonstrate their lack of understanding about the purposes for reading (responses to Question 11 and 12).

The teacher herself did not appear to have a clearly defined understanding of purposes for reading.

R: How important is oral reading?

T: Very.

R: Why?

T: They need it for Grade 2. A lot of oral work is done in Grade 2. They can read better silently than orally my way. You can tell by watching them.

The reason given for oral reading seems narrow and not well thought out. How one can tell that the children read better silently than orally merely by watching them, is puzzling too.

A similar example occurred one day after the teacher passed out the children's spelling notebooks when she advised the students, "This is important as it will be on the tests we have this month." The children were given the justification that the reason for reading and related activities was to pass a test. There was a definite emphasis on the ends, not the means, of reading activities.

Such limited purposes as finishing the activity and going on to the next page or the next book were frequently employed.

Further examples from introductions to various lessons in language arts which were conducted by the teacher will confirm the limited purpose of reading from which the teacher was working. (S stands for student).

Example 1: (The teacher was introducing an assignment in the children's reading workbooks).

T: Let's look at our workbooks - next page. What do you do, Jim? (Another student calls out instead of Jim).

S: You put the numbers in for each.

T: Alright. Do the next three pages.

As it happens, each page involved different directions, but frequently directions were explained only for the first page of an assignment and more importantly, the teacher usually did not give a reason or purpose for doing the pages in the first place. Nor was there ever an attempt to explain how it fit into the greater scheme of classroom work. It is possible that a purpose could have been established earlier in the year for such reading activities, even if it was set up rather implicitly, but it seems that this is an area which requires further investigation. During the time of this study, reading activities were part of the daily routine and the children seemed to have no way of knowing (other than by using their own resources) what purposes they really held or how they fit into a larger instructional scheme.

Example 2: (In the beginning of a creative writing lesson, notebooks were passed out and the children were told to sit down on the floor in front of the chalkboard.) The teacher wrote the following: Today the sun has finally come out. It makes me feel . . .

(All the children read the words with the teacher.) Then the teacher said, "Finish that story in your books."

Example 3:

T: We're going to do some spelling. (The notebooks were then passed out.)

T: We're able to print on one space only so leave one space between each word.

(The children seemed uncertain. They did not appear to understand. The teacher then printed an example on the board.)

T: Oh, I forgot . . . some of you have books with narrow lines so use two lines if you do. (With this the teacher began to dictate 20 spelling words.)

Example 4: (A new unit in the group's reader was being introduced by the teacher.)

T: We're starting a new unit. This is a nonsense poem. You look at the picture while I read the poem.

S: We want to read it! (with indignation).

T: Okay, All together. (The teacher read expressively while the group read quite quietly.)

Establishing such a limited purpose for reading seems to have figured very prominently in the children's concept of reading strategies for neither group viewed reading as a very meaningful experience (see especially Questions 7, 11, and 12). In their actual strategies, the failure to view reading as a meaning-seeking process may account in part for the low percentages in the category of semantic acceptability.

Lack of Integration of Content

From glancing at the class timetable (see Appendix C), one can see that each subject has its separate time and even parts of one subject (Language Arts: spelling, creative writing, and reading) have their own time slots. Not only that, but reading and comprehension have different times to be taught. Reading independently meant doing workbook pages, reading with the teacher meant reading silently then orally in the reading group, while comprehension meant being given a duplicated sheet with a story to read after which one filled in the blanks in sentences underneath the story with the correct word. In the two weeks spent observing, these time periods were adhered to strictly whether one lesson was finished or not. If it was time for the next lesson to begin, books were put away and the new lesson began. Usually this meant that the high reading group had been finished for some time and was merely waiting for the next lesson. However, books for other lessons were not to be taken out until that lesson began.

T: Tom, why do you have that book? That math book
is not be be brought out unless you ask.

Nobody ever did ask. Consequently, much time was spent by the high group chatting about other things. On the other hand, the low reading group was never quite ready for the next lesson so they spent extra time at recess completing workbook pages. The middle group was usually able to time the completion of their work quite closely with the time period allowed. However, having subjects and even parts of subjects taught so separately, the children might not be able to relate information from one subject to that of another. Since the teacher did not usually integrate the pieces, the children were left to their own devices for fitting things together.

The teacher herself provided an instance of this lack of integration:

R: How was phonics taught?

T: One month or so and then I began some reading.

R: In what order was phonics taught?

T: Like in Working with Letters.

The first question was not answered. Apparently, the 'how' (the method) was not as important or not as well understood as the 'when' and the length of time required. Phonics was taught first; then reading began. Little connection seemed to be made between the two. The teaching of phonics followed the step-by-step introduction of letter sounds advocated by the workbook, Working with Letters. This was not adapted. All children went through a similar sequence. Although the low achievers did know isolated letter sounds and knew they were supposed to 'sound words out', they had not integrated this information well enough to be able to employ it as a reading strategy. The high achievers were better able to integrate information themselves, but it seems that their reading instruction played a very small role in that integration.

Absence of a Consistent Criterion of Good Reading

R: What are the deficits of the low achievers?

T: Um . . . initial and final consonants . . . and vowels . . . general difficulty with phonics.

R: What makes the higher achievers better?

T: . . . They're strong readers. They can interpret a story. It's not just factual.

R: What important things do the children in the low group need to learn about reading?

T: Fluency . . . not to be inhibited.

R: What important things do the children in the
high group need to learn about reading?

T: Some need comprehension. Some need fluency.

The teacher's concerns for the low achievers include phonics and fluency and no mention is made of understanding while the concerns for the higher achievers do not include phonics but stress comprehension and fluency. The fact that the high achievers are better readers the teacher attributes to their understanding not just of actual events in a story, but of their ability to interpret these events. The ability to interpret is valued in the high achievers, but the teacher's aim seems to be making certain the low achievers can decode quickly. The teacher appears inconsistent about her own criterion of good reading. Does she believe the low group is capable of decoding but not of understanding? A further statement appears to confirm this. The teacher said that when children begin to read "it's hard to both read and understand." So, does the teacher mean one should settle for one or the other aim since both together - decoding and comprehending - are too difficult? Or does the teacher mean that she views reading as a two-stage learning process in which one first learns to decode (identify words) so that comprehension can then follow? It is impossible to say.

The two groups of readers reflect a similar discrepancy when asked "What do good readers have to know?" In replying to this, the emphasis in the low achievers was on speed. Half the children said that good readers must read quickly. None of the low achievers mentioned that understanding what is read is important but half of the group reflect the teacher's emphasis on fluency or, as they call it, 'speed'. In the high achievers, two children said that good readers must understand what the stories are about. This is in marked contrast to the lower group. Also, none of the high achievers mentioned speed, instead they emphasized that good readers must know the words. So, some children in each group reflect the differing emphases which the teacher believes is necessary. However, although there is a division between the two groups, this aim has not been reflected consistently within each group, nor for that matter, has it been consistently reflected in individuals.

Speed was frequently emphasized with the low achievers as the following description of a portion of a lesson will demonstrate.

(Reading lessons with the teacher consisted of all the children being asked to read each page silently. Then this was followed by one child being chosen to read the page orally to the group).

T: Read the page to yourselves. See how quickly you can read it. (Most of the children merely glanced at the page and raised their hands immediately to indicate they had finished.) I've got some fast readers here today. (The teacher had responded with praise when it seemed quite apparent that the children had not even read the page silently.) (Usually when children read in their reading group to the teacher, each child selected to read one page. However, one child in the lower group was an especially slow reader. After prodding him onwards several times, the teacher finally stopped him half way through reading the page.) Then the teacher told the group:

T: Alex is not concentrating. You continue, Mary. Alex seemed to be reading as fast as he could and appeared to be struggling to keep up even the slower pace he had set.)

Speed was not mentioned to the high achievers during the observation period, although a couple of the children did read quite slowly.

Understanding stories was not stressed with either group of readers and this may account for the low percentages both groups obtained on the category of semantic acceptability on the modified Reading Miscue Inventory. Still, the high achievers were sometimes asked more challenging questions about stories than the low achievers.

The questions asked the latter tended to be factual and often referred to a picture while the questions asked the former were frequently of an inferential, rather than liberal or factual type. An actual instance of each type will be cited.

Low Achievers:

(The story was Little Red Riding Hood.)

T: What is Little Red Riding Hood wearing? (The answer was in the picture.)

High Achievers:

T: What do you think this poem will be about? . . . Where do you think it might take place? . . . Why?

It does seem that the latter form of questioning would stimulate more active participation and higher level thinking than the former, yet it was infrequently employed with the high achievers and rarely, if ever, employed with the low achievers. This might mean that the teacher believed the students must master factual questions before progressing to questions of an inferential nature.

Smith (1975) has said that one does not know something well until it can be expressed well. The teacher's inconsistent manner would seem to indicate that she may not really understand what she is doing very well. Since the teacher seemed uncertain of a criterion of good reading, it is questionable how helpful she could be in encouraging the children to aspire to the goals necessary for becoming good readers.

Examples of good reading were not provided by the teacher by reading stories to the children, nor were children who read well complimented and encouraged to read to the class. So when the children were asked, "Who is the best reader in your class?" (Question 10), it was not surprising that the answers, especially among the low achievers, varied tremendously. No special praise nor reprimands were given and the children were not very aware of how well or poorly they read. Most of the children believed they were good readers (Question 8). One of the few instances of praise noted involved the teacher saying to one entire reading group, "You - some of you - you know who you are - did well yesterday". From this comment, any and all of the children could believe that they were the ones who did well. This comment, non-specific as it was, could help to perpetuate whatever reading strategies each child was already employing.

Likewise, when the children were asked, "What will you have to do to read better?", (Question 12) the responses for the two groups spread over four different categories and there was little consensus on what reading better would actually entail.

If the teacher had a well-defined criterion of good reading, this might have been reflected in both the students' reading strategies and their verbalizations. Instead, observation suggested a strategy for identifying words using graphic form and little else to support this.

The students' verbalizations reflect such variability on the criterion of good reading that one must conclude that this was probably not clearly present in the classroom.

Problems in the Implementation of the Reading Series

R: How did you select the reading series used for the high and low achievers in reading?

T: They were recommended by another Grade 1 teacher.

Although the Ginn Integrated Language Programme and the Nelson Language Development Reading Program were used respectively, as core materials for the high and low achievers in reading, the teacher did not adhere to the philosophy of either series. The Ginn Integrated Language Program emphasizes a total program of interdependent and simultaneous activities: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It recommends wide use of language experience charts, establishing a purpose for reading, introducing new vocabulary in context, reading with understanding, and stressing activities to augment creativity and appreciation. A large block of time (one hour and 15 minutes) is suggested for each reading lesson. This lesson would include a discussion, an oral reading, and a skills lesson. Later in the day, related activities in art, music, writing, or acting may follow-up the the original lesson.

Teachers, necessarily, modify and adapt reading materials to fit both their own teaching style and the needs of their students. However, the classroom teacher in question did not seek to modify the reading series. The teacher believed she was following it closely when, in reality, she was not. The students sequentially read each story in the reader, one per day, both silently and orally in their reading group. Then the appropriate pages in the workbook were done as seatwork. Independent and simultaneous activities did not occur. No language experience charts were used. There seemed to be an absence of any explicit purpose for reading. New vocabulary was always introduced in isolation and the 15 to 25 minute blocks of time arranged for reading lessons were not sufficient for any discussions or follow-ups to be done.

The second series employed, the Nelson Language Development Program, stresses the relationship of reading to thinking. The program is planned with the individuality of both teachers and students in mind. It suggests that activities such as language experience charts should be integral to the program but should not be dominated by the teacher. It also says that the workbooks are best used to strengthen skills while the teacher provides additional practice and makes certain that the students understand. Using context and introducing words in context is stressed as well.

Again, although the teacher followed some of the questioning suggested in the guide book, the program consisted only of reading the stories and doing the seatwork included in the workbooks. At no time was extra explanation or practice given to new skills introduced in the workbook and no other seatwork was provided. There was no individuality as the program suggests because all children followed exactly the same sequence. Words were always introduced in isolation while predicting from context was never employed. Language experience charts and other activities were not used. The reading lesson itself was teacher-dominated.

From this, one concludes that although two different reading series were employed in the classroom, the teacher did not use them any differently. Both groups of students, the high achievers in reading and the low achievers in reading, were taught by the same method (the sight-word approach) only in separate reading series. It appears both from examining the children's reading strategies and their verbalizations, that this limited method was inadequate, especially for the needs of the low achievers in reading. (See the responses to Question 13 on the Children's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire.)

Descriptions of Reading Instruction

This final section describes actual instances of classroom reading instruction in which the reader will find the pattern just discussed which has led to uncertainty about reading strategies.

It was 9:05 a.m. on a Tuesday morning. All of the children were seated in their reading groups. The high and low groups received no instruction. They automatically opened their reading workbooks to do their corrections from the previous day while the middle reading group, seated on the floor in front of the chalkboard, was with the teacher. The teacher wrote the vocabulary for the new story on the board: were, real, ears, faces.

T: These are words you may not know. Let's read them together. (The children read the list of words with the teacher. Several children were apparently lip reading.)

T: Look at the picture. How does the boy look?

S: Sad?

T: Read the first page to yourselves. (Only seconds passed before hands waved madly in the air. One child was then selected from the 'hand wavers' to read the page orally while the other children followed along. The teacher corrected all miscues.)

T: Read the next page silently. (A few seconds elapsed before children again waved their hands in the air.) Who'd like to read that? (Several children called out and one was chosen to read the page for the others. All miscues were again corrected.) Did they get anywhere asking questions in the story?

S: No! (Chorus of voices).

T: (The remainder of the story was completed using the same format. Then the children were told to take out their workbooks.) What you have to do - are you following? - is read pages 30, 31, and 32 very, very carefully. Read and answer the questions. The answers aren't there.

This concluded the middle group's reading lesson. While it was in progress most of the low reading group were chatting quietly, one was walking about and two were trying to do their workbook corrections but were having obvious difficulty. One person in the high reading group was working in her phonics workbook while all the others (who had few or no corrections) were having a discussion about height. This pattern usually occurred when groups were not directly working with the teacher because free time activities were not encouraged and there were no library books in the classroom. Finally, all of the children were told to line up to go to the television room for their regular programme, Read Along.

At 9:45 a.m. the children returned from the television room and the low reading group's lesson began. Again the teacher printed new vocabulary on the chalkboard.

T: Read these new words together. (The words were read.) Read the story's title. (It was read.) Look at the picture. What time of year is it?

(Somebody answered.) How do you know? (A reason was given.) Read the first page to yourselves. (Then the teacher called upon a student to read orally. Most of the children had not finished reading the page. One child had barely begun and even had trouble following along as the page was read orally. At this point the teacher walked away from the group to answer questions in the other reading groups. The rest of the story was finished in the same manner. As with the middle reading group, the teacher corrected all miscues when she was with the group. When the story had been read, the children took out their workbooks without having to be told and turned to the 'next' page.)

T: Circle or print the correct word for two pages. Then underline the sentence or sentences that match each picture up on the next.

With that, the teacher moved to the high reading group's table. It was 10:00 a.m. Exactly the same procedure was followed. Sight-words were placed on the chalkboard to be read together. The children read each page silently and one child was chosen to read orally. Several questions were asked by the teacher as the story progressed and all miscues were corrected.

For example:

student	text	teacher
shattering	chattering	chattering

student	text	teacher
trumble	tumble	tumble
boy	boys	boys
what	when	when
down	up	up

The first two miscues were made by a child with a speech impediment. He could read the words, but was unable to say them correctly. The next three miscues did make sense in the story. At the end of the reading session, workbook pages were assigned. Then all the children were lined up for recess.

The overall impression one has about the morning's reading lessons is that they moved along quickly. The amount of time and the placing of the time allotted to each reading group was certainly to the low reading group's disadvantage. During the first half hour, they tried to correct workbook errors from the previous day with no assistance being given. When it finally was their turn to read, the period spent with them was less than that spent with each of the other two groups. Approximately 15 minutes was spent with the low group while the middle group and high group usually had about 25 minute reading lessons with the teacher.

From this example it can be seen that all groups were taught by a similar sight-word approach. Perhaps this lead to the low achiever's belief that the teacher was not helping them to learn to read (Question 13). The method employed seemed inappropriate for them and instead of receiving extra instruction, they actually received less than the high achievers.

To pursue this point further, an instance of a lesson with the low achievers involving workbook corrections will be described. Usually the children did their workbook corrections independently the day after the teacher had checked them. However, because the low reading group had more difficulty than usual with page 71 in their "We Can Read Mr. Whiskers" workbook, the following correction session occurred:

(The story on page 71 was read together out loud by the entire reading group. Then they proceeded to do the six questions at the bottom of the page.)

T: Read Number 4 together. Where did he go?

S: To play with some boats.

T: What did the duck say in Number 2? (A student from the higher group interrupted to say he could not find the workbook page.) Go to your desk. (There was an interruption from another group. The teacher answered the question and the correction session continued. Two more questions, Numbers 1 and 3 were answered and an interruption from another reading group occurred. The teacher this time told the student she would be with him in a moment. The final two questions, Numbers 5 and 6, were read. Then the teacher concluded the session.)

T: If all of those are now correct, give yourself a
check - a nice, neat, small, little check.

The correction session, complete with interruptions, took less than 10 minutes. The interruptions during the lesson were distracting and the teacher handled them inconsistently. The answers to questions were not discussed nor were wrong answers explained. In fact, the aim of the session seemed to be to get checks on the page, not to understand.

Two other lessons are briefly described to show that the children, especially the low achievers, were experiencing some difficulty with the instruction:

Example 1:

(This lesson introduced compound words. All of the children were seated on the floor in front of the chalkboard while the teacher sat in front on a chair.)

T: Can anyone tell me what a compound word is? (Silence . . . finally one hand went up.) Yes?

S: Mailbox.

T: That's right. Can you name any others? (Three of the high achievers in reading raised their hands while the other children looked blank. The teacher pointed to each in succession and received more examples.)

S: Into.

Something.

Mailbox. (The bell rang for dismissal and the lesson ended at this point.)

Example 2:

(This lesson introduced the children to duplicated comprehension sheets.)

T: Let's read this together. (The high achievers in reading easily coped with the words and format; the middle group had some difficulty; but the low achievers in reading struggled. Now fill the words in the blanks underneath the story. (A hand went up.)

S: What do you mean?

T: (Noticeably irritated.) Look at the picture. What are the jobs dogs do? (Nobody else asked for help. All students filed back to their desks. For half an hour the children kept their sheets. The high achievers finished quickly while the low achievers chatted, daydreamed, or became discouraged for they could not read the sheet to find the answers.)

T: Finished or not put the sheets up on my desk.

In these descriptions of actual classroom instruction, the sources of the confusion about reading strategies (the teacher's confusion about reading strategies, the limited purpose established for reading, the lack of integration of content, the absence of a consistent criterion of good reading, and problems in the implementation of the reading series) can be seen.

Summary

This chapter has presented the findings related to three areas: the children's verbalizations about reading strategies, the children's actual reading strategies, and classroom interrelated factors.

The verbalized concepts of reading strategies of both low and high achievers were not notable for the diversity between the two groups but for the conflicting responses exhibited by individuals in the groups. Two overall characteristics emerged. First, there was considerable confusion about the nature of effective reading strategies. Second, the children's concept of reading strategies was limited. So, classroom reading instruction needed to be investigated since it can be assumed that it was a major factor in promoting the students' beliefs and actual strategies.

The pattern of actual reading strategies exhibited by both the low and high achievers was surprisingly similar. Both groups relied heavily upon graphic similarity as their main cue and other strategies, being rather inconsistent, were not well integrated. The main difference between the two groups was that the high achievers did integrate reading strategies better than the low achievers so they employed self-correction and semantic acceptability more.

In the third section on interrelated classroom factors, a pattern which emerged from the observation of classroom instruction and which seemed to account for the development of these inconsistent reading strategies was described. This uncertainty about reading strategies was attributed to five sources: the teacher's own uncertainty about reading strategies, which was mirrored in the children, the limited purpose established for reading, the lack of integration of content, the absence of a consistent criterion of good reading, and problems in the implementation of the reading series. Since the teacher who participated in the study was recognized as being competent, the findings would seem to indicate that teacher education may not be preparing teachers adequately for their classroom roles.

Chapter 5 will help summarize, clarify and extend these findings.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter contains a brief summary of the study, the main findings and conclusions, recommendations for further research, and implications for reading instruction.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate Grade 1 children's concepts of reading strategies and to see how these strategies had been shaped by classroom factors. The sample consisted of six low and six high achievers in reading from one classroom in an Alberta school board. Two weeks were spent observing reading situations in the classroom and taking detailed notes. Each child from the sample was also privately interviewed. First, the Standard Reading Inventory was employed to establish the child's instructional reading level and was supplemented by the Gray Oral Reading Test and the Classroom Reading Inventory to provide at least 20 miscues at this level. Second, the Children's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire was administered. Miscues were subsequently analyzed and questionnaire responses were tabulated and categorized. Then all data collected was examined and the resulting pattern was described.

Findings and Conclusions

Research Question 1

What do Grade 1 children verbalize about reading strategies?

Responses of both low and high achievers in reading to the Children's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire were inconsistent. Although the high achievers sometimes showed more insight to the process, more confusion was noted in the responses of individuals than in differences between the two groups. As well, both groups of readers exhibited a limited concept of reading strategies which emphasized reading as identifying and remembering words. The one dramatic difference between the two groups emerged when they were asked, "Does your teacher help you to learn to read?" (Question 13). Since most of the high achievers (five out of six) said she did, while most of the low achievers (five out of six again) said she did not, one was led to examine the nature of classroom reading instruction. The conclusion was that instruction may have been a major factor in contributing to the students' verbalized beliefs.

Research Question 2

What reading strategies do the children actually employ?

All children in the study displayed a similar limited pattern of reading strategies which relied heavily upon the graphic similarity taught in the classroom sight-word method. The children were reluctant to figure out unknown words. When encountering such words (phonics was infrequently employed) both low and high achievers usually acted uncertain, and were rarely able to identify them. Since the children rarely tried to predict unknown words from sentence context, meaning did not appear to be a cue on which they focused.

Research Question 3

Is there any difference between the verbalized and actual reading strategies of low achieving and high achieving readers?

Firstly, there were numerous differences between what both groups verbalized and the actual strategies they employed. The best example of this comes in Question 6 when the children are asked, "What do you do when you do not know a word?" Although all children in both groups said they would sound the word out, few of them ever did. Instead, they continued to guess what the word was from its graphic similarity to other words that they already knew.

Secondly, the reading strategies (both verbalized and actual) of the two groups of readers were different more in degree than kind. Both groups held limited and inconsistent notions of reading strategies, although the high achievers had managed to gain slightly more insight and were able to mention more strategies, and occasionally, more relevant strategies than the low achievers. In actual reading situations, both groups exhibited a similar pattern of reading strategies. However, the high achievers more successfully integrated a broader repertoire of strategies.

Research Question 4

How do classroom factors shape these reading strategies?

The observation of classroom reading instruction suggests that the children's confused concept of reading strategies had developed from five main sources. The first source and by far the most influential, was the classroom teacher's uncertain concept of reading strategies which was mirrored in the children. The second was the limited purpose established for reading in the classroom. The purpose, which was usually implicit not explicit, did not imply that reading was a meaning-seeking process. Third, the lack of integration of content meant the children were left to their own resources when relating information. Fourth, there was no consistent criterion of good reading established in the classroom so the children seemed uncertain about the goals to which they should aspire. Fifth, in implementing both reading series, the teacher had not apparently employed the philosophy and aims of the series.

Recommendations for Further Research

Since a 'holistic' research approach yields abundant and probably more useful and accurate data, it seems that there is a need to focus on this approach in future research. Such methods as ethnography, ethnomethodology, and phenomenology could be used more frequently and a continual effort could be made to improve these methods and develop better research designs. Two ways of improving research using these research orientations would be to (1) increase the length of observation and (2) to include more and different factors in the research.

(1) Longitudinal studies that would produce more information on the actual development of reading strategies are needed. Studies starting at the beginning of Grade 1 and continuing for several months and studies investigating the children's concept of reading strategies at the end of Grade 1, Grade 2, and Grade 3, would be useful.

(2) Future research could be broadened to include parents (their beliefs about reading and how these have influenced their children's concepts), children outside of school (a survey of their out-of-school reading strategies and reading habits), and children's reading in other subject areas.

Since all reading in the present study which was used to assess reading strategies was oral reading, silent reading needs to be examined as well. This could be done through children retelling passages which have been read, by observing how students consistently use meaning derived from their reading (e.g., in discussions and activities) or through the use of protocol analysis.

The present study indicated that the teacher's own belief system was probably the most important factor which shaped the children's reading strategies. Also, the main difference between the low and high achievers in the study seemed to be their ability to integrate information from the three cue systems. Both of these factors and the influence of different types of instruction on reading strategies all require further investigation and should be included in future research.

Implications for Instruction

From the findings and conclusion of this study, the following implications are suggested:

(1) Since both low and high achievers' verbalizations about reading strategies seemed uncertain, this would indicate the need for teachers to be more aware of the student's concepts of reading strategies and to use this knowledge as an aid in ensuring that students develop broad, well-defined concepts of reading strategies which focus on reading as a meaningful activity.

(2) The main difference between low and high achievers' actual reading strategies seemed to be not in the type of information processed, but in how successfully it was processed. As with studies by Clay (1968), Biemiller (1970), Goodman and Burke (1972), the present study found that the difference between the two groups'

reading strategies lay in how well the students integrated information from three cue systems. This finding should be known to teachers as it seems to provide a major reason for the low achievement of certain readers.

(3) Teachers should be aware that different instructional methods produce different concepts of reading strategies and both method and materials should be chosen (and if necessary, modified) to accomplish their objectives.

(4) The questionnaires, complemented in this study by a modified analysis of students' miscues, were employed to provide information on both children's and teachers' concepts of reading strategies. This would seem to be a useful tool to be used by classroom teachers when attempting to analyze the effectiveness of their instruction and the children's concept of reading strategies which developed.

(5) The results of this study support Barr and Duffy's (1978) thesis that the most significant factor in reading instruction is not the method or the materials but the teacher's own belief system. This conclusion points to the necessity of developing preservice and inservice programs that give teachers more insight into the reading process (Stauffer, 1969). For, teachers do not need specific directions which they must follow in the classroom (since the appropriateness of such directions is completely dependent upon the learner and the particular

instance at any given time) but teachers need background information upon which instructional decisions can be based. The findings of this study suggest that at the present time teacher education may not be adequately preparing teachers to make instructional decisions. As Smith (1975) says:

> Teachers are in fact trained not to think; . . . Teachers in training are not always presented with meaningful information which they can relate to what they know already. Rather they are bombarded with "facts" or prescriptions to be summarily digested. The subsequent utility of ideas in the classroom is less a consideration than the passing of examinations (p. 239).

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Children's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire

Children's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire

1. How do you know what a story will be about before you read it?
2. Do you look at pictures when you read?
   - Why or why not?
   - Should you use pictures to help you read?
3. Do you read out loud when you read?
   - Do you need to read out loud?
   - How else do people read? Why?
4. Do you look at every letter when you read?
   - Why or why not?
   - Do you think you need to?
5. Do you look at every word when you read?
   - Why or why not?
   - Do you think you need to?
6. What do you do when you do not know a word?
   - Why?
   - Is there anything else that you can do?
7. How can you tell if you make a mistake when you are reading?
   - What do you do when you make a mistake?
   - Why?
   - Is it alright to make a mistake?
   - Why or why not?
8. Are you a good reader?
   - Why or why not?

9. Does your teacher think you are a good reader?
   - Why or why not?
10. Who is the best reader in your class?
   - Why?
11. What do good readers have to know?
   - Is there anything else?
12. What will you have to do to read better?
   - Is there anything else?
13. Does your teacher help you to learn to read?
   - What does she tell you to do?
   - Is there anything else?
14. Why does your teacher put children into different groups to read?

APPENDIX B

Teacher's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire

Teacher's Concept of Reading Strategies Questionnaire

1. How useful are pictures to the children as they read?
   - Do you encourage the children to guess information from the pictures?
   - Is it good for the children to figure out words from the picture?
2. Should reading be a silent or oral activity or both?
   - Why?
3. Do you encourage the children to look at each letter as they read?
   - Why or why not?
4. Do you encourage the children to look at each word as they read?
   - Why or why not?
5. Do you encourage the children to use context as they read?
   - Why or why not?
   - If so, how do you teach them to use context?
6. What do you do when a child does not know a word?
   - Why?
7. Do you ever have a child guess what an unknown word might be?
8. What do you do when a child makes a mistake?
   - Why?
   - Should all mistakes be corrected?
   - Why?

9. Who is the best reader in the class?
   - Why?
10. What are the most important things the low achievers in reading need to learn?
11. What are the most important things the high achievers in reading need to learn?
12. What are the characteristics of the low achievers in reading?
13. What are the characteristics of the high achievers in reading?
14. How did you place the children in reading groups?

APPENDIX C

Classroom Timetable

Classroom Timetable

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:05	Middle reading group	Middle reading group	Middle reading group	Middle reading group	Middle reading group
9:30	Television	Television	Television	Television	Television
9:45	Low reading group	Low reading group	Low reading group	Low reading group	Low reading group
10:00	High reading group	High reading group	High reading group	High reading group	High reading group
10:30	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal
Recess					
10:45	Comprehension	Gym	Comprehension	Comprehension	Comprehension
11:15	Comprehension	Gym	Comprehension	Comprehension	Comprehension
11:30	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal
Lunch					
1:00	USSR*	USSR	USSR	USSR	USSR
1:15	Math	Math	Music	Science	Music
1:45	Creative writing	Art	Music	Science	Music
2:15	Spelling	Art	Music	Science	Music
2:35	Magic circle	Magic circle	Comprehension	Magic circle	Comprehension
2:55	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal

*Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading.

APPENDIX D

Sample Protocols

Two sample protocols are given, one from a low achiever and one from a high achiever in reading

Subject 9 - Low Achiever in Reading

Researcher (R)
Student (S)

1. R: How do you know what a story will be about before you read it?
S: You read the . . . ah . . . title. You read in your mind and then put up your hand.
R: Is there anything else?
S: No.

2. R: Do you look at pictures when you read?
S: No.
R: Why not?
S: Because you might forget what word you're on.
R: Do you ever look at the pictures?
S: Yes.
R: When?
S: After I read.
R: What do the pictures tell you?
S: I don't know . . . about the story?
R: Should you use pictures to help you read?
S: . . . yes?
R: Why?
S: (shrugs)

3. R: Do you read out loud when you read?
S: Uh-huh.
R: Do you need to read out loud?

S: (no response)

R: How else do people read?

S: In their mind.

R: Why?

S: So they won't bug other people.

R: Do you mean that it's quieter?

S: Yes.

4. R: Do you look at every letter when you read?

S: Um-hum.

R: Why?

S: So you won't . . . so you know the letters.

R: Do you think you need to?

S: Um-hum.

R: What would happen if you didn't?

S: You wouldn't know the letters.

5. R: Do you look at every word as you read?

S: Um-hum.

R: Why?

S: So you'll know all the words in the story.

R: Do you think you need to?

S: Um-hum.

6. R: What do you do when you do not know a word?

S: Sound it out.

R: Is there anything else you can do?

S: Tell your friend and they can help.

R: Is there anything else?

S: No.

7. R: How can you tell if you make a mistake when you are reading?

S: The teacher says.

R: How do you know if the teacher isn't there?

S: I don't know.

R: What do you do when you make a mistake?

S: Go back.

R: Why?

S: (no response)

R: Is it alright to make a mistake?

S: Um-hum.

R: Why?

S: (no response)

8. R: Are you a good reader?

S: Um-hum.

R: Why?

S: I don't know.

R: Can you think of any reason?

S: No.

9. R: Does your teacher think you're a good reader?

S: Yes.

R: Why?

S: I don't know.

10. R: Who is the best reader in your class?

S: I don't know.

R: Who do you think?

S: Donny?

R: Why?

S: Because he gets his reader before the other people.

11. R: What do you think good readers have to know?

S: How to read out loud.

R: Is there anything else?

S: No.

12. R: What will you have to do to read better?

S: Read a bit faster.

R: Is there anything else?

S: No.

13. R: Does your teacher help you to learn to read?

S: No.

R: Has she ever told you ways to read better?

S: No.

R: What does she tell you to do?

S: She writes the words on the top of the board and then she tells us.

R: What does she tell you?

S: What the words are.

R: Is there anything else?

S: We have to remember them.

14. R: Why does your teacher put children into different reading groups?

S: There isn't enough room.

R: Do you mean there isn't enough room at one table for everyone?

S: Yes.

Subject 1 - High Achiever in Reading

1. R: How do you know what a story will be about before you read it?

S: Because we used to read Mr. Muggs and we still read Mr. Muggs - okay?

R: How can you tell what this story (pointing) will be about before you read it?

S: Because Joe is the name of a person, I know it has boy in it (pointing to title).

R: Is there anything else?

S: Well, the title.

R: Anything else?

S: The pictures.

2. R: Do you look at pictures when you read?

S: No.

R: Do you ever look at the pictures?

S: Yes, after.

R: Why?

S: Because I don't like just reading and turning the pages. That's boring.

R: Do the pictures help you read?

S: Yeah.

R: How?

S: When I'm stuck on a word I look at the picture and it shows me what the word means.

R: Should you use the pictures to help you read?

S: Not really.

R: Why?

S: It takes so much time.

3. R: Do you read out loud when you read?

S: No. Not if I'm reading to myself. I just read in my head. But if I'm reading to my sister or Mum or Dad I read out loud.

R: Why do you read in your head?

S: So I don't bother anybody.

4. R: Do you look at every letter when you read?

S: Yes, if I need to know the words if I'm stuck on them.

R: If you aren't stuck, do you look at every letter?

S: No, I don't need to.

R: Why?

S: I just quickly read the line of words.

R: Do you think you need to look at every letter?

S: No.

5. R: Do you look at every word when you read?

S: Yeah.

R: Why?

S: To know the words.

R: Do you think you need to?

S: Yeah. When I'm in high school or grades two, three or four, I can't ask people what the words are!

6. R: What do you do when you do not know a word?

S: I sound it out and if I can't the teacher will help.

R: Is there anything else you can do?

S: I could ask someone to help me.

R: Anything else?

S: (nods no).

7. R: How can you tell if you make a mistake when you are reading?

S: If it doesn't look right.

R: Anything else?

S: If it doesn't sound right.

R: What do you mean?

S: Prentid to be asleep didn't sound right so I knew it should be pretended.

R: Didn't it make sense?

S: No.

R: What do you do when you make a mistake?

S: I look back and sound it out.

R: Why?

S: So I get the word.

R: Is it alright to make a mistake?

S: Yes, because when you were little you made mistakes.

R: Are you a good reader?

S: Yes. The teacher and my Mum tell me.

R: How else do you know?

S: I listen to my voice and know I'm a good reader.

9. R: Does your teacher think you are a good reader?

S: Yes.

R: Why?

S: Because she listens to my voice.

10. R: Who is the best reader in your class?

S: The whole class is.

R: Is anyone a better reader?

S: No, not really.

R: Why not?

S: Because everyone gets stuck.

11. R: What do good readers have to know?

S: The words.

R: Is there anything else?

S: They have to be able to understand the words . . . what they mean like . . . like when I said prentid to be asleep.

12. R: What will you have to do to read better?

S: I have to learn bigger words.

R: Is there anything else?

S: Not really.

13. R: Does your teacher help you to learn to read?

S: Well, kind of . . . fast and slow, you know . . . like with exclamation marks.

R: What does she tell you to do?

S: Like with play she'd write 'play' and say 'play' and we'd say 'play'.

R: Is there anything else?

S: She tells us words we can't sound out.

14. R: Why does your teacher put children into different groups to read?

S: Because some of us were reading so fast we had to go into a different group.

R: What about the others?

S: As they started reading the teacher made three groups.